

JANUARY 2014

# sgn Scoops digital

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

DONNA KING  
PAGE TRIO  
CHRIS ALLMAN

# David Phelps



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## OUR MISSION

SGNScoops exists to promote the gospel by unveiling what is intriguing and real about Southern Gospel and Christian Country music. With integrity, we aspire to strengthen Christians, highlight people who are fulfilling a call to minister and emphasize the music that inspires audiences and glorifies God.

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# PUBLISHER'S POINT

**by Rob Patz**



Happy New Year! 2014 is upon us and with a new year comes a time to make new goals for the months ahead. I love setting goals and the exhilaration of reaching them. At the end of 2013, I was praying about the new Scoops year and the one word the Lord revealed to me was "Determination." I am determined to do everything the Lord enables me to do, to make this year the best yet for our magazine, our readers and our industry.

So what do I mean that I am 'determined to' in 2014? Being 'determined' means 'having made a firm decision and being resolved not to change it.' Some great synonyms include being 'resolved', 'committed', 'resolute', 'strong-willed', and my favorite: 'tenacious'. Many of you who know me know that I can be tenacious about my beliefs. This year, I am determined to be committed and tenacious about promoting the Gospel through SGN Scoops.

When the Apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthians, he discussed this same type of tenacity. "For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified." 1 Corinthians 2:2 (NKJV). I am resolved to have Paul's determination and to keep the main message of SGN Scoops the same as it has always been: to reflect the changing power of the good news of the Gospel.

I am more determined than ever to see lives changed through the power of Jesus Christ. I am more determined than ever to build SGN Scoops magazine into a leader in our industry by introducing our magazine and our music to as many new people as possible. My staff and I are committed to bring you great stories in 2014 about the hearts and lives of artists you love already and artists that you will come to love. We will be tenacious in showing the love of Jesus in our magazine, through every story and feature.

I am praying the Lord increases the determination of my staff and myself to follow His direction in this New Year. May He be the source of your determination as well in 2014!



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# Letter From The Editor

By Rhonda Frye



Happy New Year! This past year was an amazing year at SGNscoops Magazine. I can't imagine 2014 being any better! I know it will be, though because my relationships and friendships within the industry keep growing. I say it all of the time, but I am truly blessed to have made friends with so many wonderful people. The fine folks on our staff are my dearest industry friends! Our writers love the Lord and our gospel music family and it shows in the articles throughout the magazine. I'm proud of our staff! We may not always achieve perfection, but I can honestly say, we strive for excellence in all we say and do so that we can glorify God.

I love getting out to hear our artists in action! Last month I got to hear the Old Paths in concert. I appreciate them so much- they're doing a GREAT work in the Kingdom. I loved their music and testimonies, but the live jazz band was a treat! It's not that often you see a quartet switch gears and become a band on stage, but it was very cool! They also sing what I call... "Killer songs!" Their music makes you cry and shout. Make sure you check out their schedule and plan to worship with them when they come to your area.

I also got a chance to see the Martins last month. Again... WOW! I loved the Martins' enthusiasm and family harmony. I also loved the way Judy Martin-Hess shared her personal struggle with depression. She testified how God has faithfully walked with her through the journey. Personal, transparent and heart-felt testimonies always enrich a concert experience. The Martins blew me away with their acapella songs, hits and Christmas tunes, but they made me smile with how they connected to the audience. It was a great night and especially great to sit with our beloved #1 Gospel Music Lover, David Nix!

I caught Adam Crabb live in Summerville, Georgia and as

always- he blessed my heart. That boy can flat out SANG- but there really aren't words to describe how he makes that tiny harmonica RANG! More than anything, Adam boldly testified of God's intervention and involvement in his life and how grateful he was for God's mercy and grace. He challenged the congregation to be a willing vessel- that if God could use him, He could use anybody. I left uplifted and inspired feeling closer to the Lord than when I came in. Great job, Adam!

I'm looking forward to a great 2014. Actually, I'm kicking off the New Year with a major lifestyle change myself. After six years of serving a local congregation as a worship pastor, I'm following the call in my heart to pursue all avenues of Gospel music. I can't help but think of a conversation I had with Claude Hopper a couple of years ago. He basically said that he loved the music so much he just wanted to explore every aspect of the industry inside and out. I can relate! I'm excited to hurl myself into singing with my group, Rhonda Frye and Riverside. Be looking for our new single, "Looking Out For You" written by Gerald Crabb. It is scheduled to be released on the January Patterson Promotions compilation disc. I also hope to spend time songwriting and helping with the organization and promotion of events. I love this music and industry more than I can explain. I believe in the tool of Gospel Music to reach the world for Christ.

I pray you pursue God and your calling with all of your hearts this year. I dare you to declare 2014 to be the year to dive in head first into all He has planned for your good and His glory! I agree with the saying... "The worst thing you can die with is potential!" If I can serve you in anyway, email me at [rhonda@sgnscoops.com](mailto:rhonda@sgnscoops.com)

Happy New Year!

# INTRODUCING SCOOPS ON THE ROAD



If you need an Emcee for a special concert or event, check with us about having Rob Patz or Rhonda Frye to host your next program! With more than 19 years experience in media, Rob is the owner of Coastal Media- parent company of SGM Radio and SGNScoops Magazine and the host of the Southern Styles Show. Although Rhonda is fairly new to the industry, she is no stranger to the stage. She is a singer/songwriter, an associate pastor and the editor in chief for SGNScoops Magazine.

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By Rhonda Frye

We hope everyone has already marked their calendars for November 3, 4 and 5<sup>th</sup> for the 2014 Creekside Gospel Music Convention. The location will remain the same; Smoky Mountain Convention Center, Pigeon Forge, Tennessee. Be there!

We are in the early stages of planning details, but great plans are being made to include a great time of music, ministry and fellowship. We will keep you informed of the latest developments on SGNscoops.com, our facebook and twitter pages as well as in SGNscoops Magazine. You can help us spread the word by sharing announcements as they roll out in the months to come. We are excited to share some good news this month:

#### **Patterson Promotions Showcase**

During last year's convention, Patterson Promotions presented a showcase featuring many of Patterson's artists. We are pleased to announce Patterson Promotions has confirmed they will be back for 2014.

"It is my pleasure that Patterson Promotions is scheduled to take part again in 2014 at one of the fastest growing events in the southern gospel industry," Pauline Patterson shares. "We look forward to three days of wonderful music, ministry and fellowship."

Rob Patz, owner of SGNscoops Magazine offers, "It is great to be able to work with Pauline again. I love her passion for our industry and our music and we are excited to have their showcase again as part of Creekside 2014."

Editor of SGNscoops, Rhonda Frye adds, "I was blessed to take part in last year's showcase as an artist. To me, the best part was enjoying a sweet spirit of worship. Pauline's love for the Lord is evident and always sets the tone for a great

atmosphere. I'm excited to participate again this year!"

#### **Diamond Awards Voting**

ATTENTION.....THE NOMINATION PROCESS HAS BEGUN! Fans, it is your turn to speak out! The Diamond Awards are fan voted from the nomination process until choosing the final winners. During round one, all artists are on equal ground, so tell us who your favorites are! Please vote and share the link on your website and all social media outlets.

#### **Live Webcast Announcing Top 10 Nominees**

We are very excited to announce how we will unveil the top ten nominees! SGNscoops has partnered with Chapel Valley and Steve Case of ASGM to announce the top 10 nominees of each category via Live Webcast! "Rob Patz, of SGN Scoops Magazine, has worked hard to promote Southern Gospel Music," Richard Hyssong said. "He has maintained a high standard of integrity, and that is why we have decided to participate in the first Diamond Awards online nomination announcements."

Rob Patz, owner of the Diamond Awards added, "I love television and the internet! For us to be able to combine the two and bring you the top 10 nominees is an innovative way to release this information. It is going to be a great night of music as well."

The Webcast, slated for April 3, 2014, will reveal top candidates as well as a concert featuring Chapel Valley artists. Performing that night will be, Paul's Journey, The Gobers, The Hyssongs, The Roarks, The Porter Family, His Mercies and Providence Quartet.



## Creekside Convention Artist Participation

We are thrilled that so many of our artists are returning for the third year straight! We have a limited amount of booths, so don't wait to reserve your space. Participation at Creekside allows you to present your ministry to new fans and provides ample opportunities to network and build relationships. Contact Rob Patz for more information regarding booth space at [rob@sgnscoops.com](mailto:rob@sgnscoops.com).

## Accommodations

Affordable rates will be offered to Creekside guests at the onsite hotel, the Ramada Inn. Call to reserve your room and make sure you tell them you are our guest! Info below:

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## Stay Up To Date

Don't miss Creekside Gospel Music Convention excitement as it builds over the next few months. Below are links to our website and social media outlets:

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# LIFE LOVE & LEGENDS

“Another Year To Serve The Lord”

BY LOU WILLS HILDRETH



What a privilege to be on the team with Rhonda Frye, our dynamic Editor-In-Chief, and Publisher Rob Patz, who consistently looks for opportunities to broaden the influence of gospel music. I appreciate their respect for history as they diligently pursue current events. Howard and I look forward to sharing our passion for gospel music, along with the other contributors to this fabulous magazine, and we thank God for the promise of another year of working together for our Lord!

As a member of the Wills Family, I have vivid memories of growing up singing with my brothers and sisters who willingly joined me in traveling thousands of miles, in a crowded automobile, to sing the gospel. Howard and I married in 1946, and by the time we got our first bus, in 1963, the Wills Family Quartet consisted of two married couples--Calvin & Lillie Wills, Howard & me. My precious husband and I have shared this gospel music journey for all these years, and we know the strength of working together as a couple. By the time our kids joined us-- the Junior Wills Family-- we needed each other's support more than ever. This combination, along with Bob Wills & The Inspirationalists, was the foundation of the television series that we pioneered in the sixties. In 1968, when Howard and I relocated to Nashville, we broadened our efforts to work with the growing gospel music industry by establishing a talent agency. This was extremely hard and tedious work, but the friends we made along the way have made the journey pure joy. My precious husband was extremely supportive of my efforts as the host of a daily television show, a highly satisfying but energy-consuming project. Interest in gospel music was exploding in Nashville, and serving on the GMA Board, helping found the SGMG Board, Gospel Radio

Seminar, Gospel Music at the White House, and other projects, were exhilarating! It gives me great joy to realize that God has allowed Howard and me to never stop traveling as ambassadors for gospel music. This is our 68<sup>th</sup> year together!

My thanks to so many of you who have ordered my new book “The Lady & Her Legacy” that has about 500 color photos and articles from this blessed journey.





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Photo A. Nashville Gospel Talent Agency 1968  
Lou & Howard Hildreth

Photo B. "Lou Wills Hildreth Celebrates 75 years In  
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ALL BECAUSE OF HIS AMAZING GRACE





## ***“Can You Handle The Truth?”***

**Do More Than Sing in 2014**

By David Staton

I am excited to be contributing a monthly article to SGN Scoops and working closely with the SGN Scoops staff. Before I start, I'd like to introduce myself to those who may not know me. My name is David Staton and I have been involved in gospel music most of my life. I started singing when I was six years old with my family. When I was in high school I started writing music and today I've been extremely blessed to have written music for most of the professional artists in gospel music. The first group outside of my family that I ever sang with was the Speer Family. I filled in for about a month. I sang lead for a few professional groups through the years. I started the LeFevre Quartet with Mike LeFevre and spent seven years there. Most recently

I sang lead for Palmetto State and sang back up for Wynonna Judd. While doing all of this, I ran the Nashville office for Song Garden Music Group where I was over publishing, promotion and A&R for the label. While I have enjoyed producing and working with successful artists, I have equally enjoyed working with regional artists who are serious about growing their music and ministry and helping them expand their reach. The internet and our changing culture have changed the music industry dramatically. In many ways, it is more challenging to make a living doing music, but in other ways, it has leveled the playing field for up and coming talented artists. I've had many artists ask me, "How do you separate music, business and ministry?" My answer



is, you don't. If any one of the three suffers, it keeps all of it from being what it could be. If you agree, then you're going to enjoy reading my article each month.

Here we are at the beginning of a new year. I love the feeling of having a new start that can be marked by a new year so you can see the progress you make with new goals and new endeavors. On January 1, 2001 (01/01/01), I married my wife. That was more than a New Year's resolution; it was a life time commitment. I vowed to love her in good times and bad, in sickness and health and for richer or poorer. We have certainly lived and loved through most of these things. As a matter of fact, my wife told me that she married me for my money and she's staying until I get some. In the last thirteen years we have had two beautiful girls and our lives are constantly in a state of change. If we weren't willing to change I don't think we could or would survive the things that have been thrown our way. As a matter of fact, every area of our lives must change as we grow. It's called life. Any business that grows and succeeds has to learn to adapt and change to the market place. I'm not sure why many people in ministry think that the need to change does not apply to them. A wise man once said, "The gospel never changes, but our methods must if we are going to reach the world around us." Show me a church not willing to change their methods and I'll show you a dying church. The same applies to those of us who sing gospel music. If we do what we've always done, I'll show you mediocre music and less and less people who want to hear it. It's easy to say that these are end times and less people want to hear the gospel and that is why our music appears to have fewer fans. I don't believe that for a minute. I don't think blaming "end times" on our laziness and lack of concern for those around us will hold water when we stand accountable for what we did and didn't do. If I'm wrong, I'll die trying. If I'm right, then we need to get serious about what we're doing and die trying. Either way, being lazy and not trying is NOT an option.

If you are a singer, I think you'll like my article. Each month I hope that you'll find something here that will help you grow and make you more effective at what you do. Whether you're a regional artist

or you sing with one of the top groups in our industry, we all need to constantly be growing and making our presentation as powerful as we can. This month I'm going to give you some advice that will allow you to step outside of what you do and see yourself from an objective viewpoint.

#### Video

Whether you use a handcam or your smart phone, the next time you sing and do a full program, record it from start to finish. Here are some things to watch for when you review your presentation:

- How do we sound? The audio doesn't lie. Whatever you hear is what everyone else hears. This should force you to want to fix those loose ends on harmony parts that may not be clean or doubling in spots.
- How do we look? I have had suits that got tossed after I saw myself in them. This is a quick way to see what you should or shouldn't wear.
- Does your body language and stage presence help or hurt your ability to connect with the crowd?
- Does your song selection flow musically and lyrically to make a coherent and powerful presentation of the gospel?
- Do you talk too much or not enough? Does what you say have meaning or are you just yelling out, "aren't you glad \_\_\_\_\_ (insert song title here)?"
- How is the balance of humor vs. serious moments in your presentation?

I love working with artists who care enough about what they do to work and get better. I hope this gives you a good place to start in order to evaluate what you do and work to make it better. Do more than sing in 2014!

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# The Many Faces of Phelps

## Gaither Vocal Band tenor continues to broaden his musical horizons

By Craig Harris



Mark Lowry doesn't know what David Phelps sounded like as a freshman in high school.

He'd guess that Phelps was already a vocal heavyweight even then. "I think he was good from the start," Lowry said of his tenure with the Gaither Vocal Band. "I don't really see that he's grown in that sense musically. He had his (music) degrees way before he met us."

However, it was at that time when Phelps had a breakthrough of sorts. "When I became a teenager, I realized I was kind of rising above other people who were doing music," Phelps said. "There was actually a moment for me in ninth grade. I sang for our town talent show (singing Sandi Patty's 'Bethlehem Morning'). They gave me a standing ovation. I remember getting in the car that night and saying 'This is what I want to do with my life.' It grew from there. I was invited to different churches and did concerts. My parents were driving me everywhere. My dad is a CPA (certified public accountant), and my mom is a professor. From those practical professions, they began to believe and encourage me. I just had this passion and drive to do it all of the time."

He's still doing it all of the time, currently in his second stint as a member of the Gaither Vocal Band. "It's been just fantastic," Phelps said. "When I joined the Vocal Band at first, Mark was there. That was always a high point with me, singing on stage with Mark Lowry. He's fantastic and a comedic genius. It was a learning experience. I remember sitting in Waco, Texas, and watching Michael English winning Dove Awards and saying to Lori (Phelps' wife), 'Boy, I would love to be up there singing with him some day.' I was thrilled to be singing with Michael English. What an incredible, iconic talent. He has helped so many vocalists in and out of the church. People have mimicked his style for a decade. Wes (Hampton) took my place when I left the Vocal Band. What a generous guy. He's literally like a little brother to me. He's become a really good friend of mine. It's been great to see his talent really grow. Then, of course, Bill (Gaither) is just a songwriter of the century. It doesn't get a whole lot bigger than that to stand

on stage and see how he communicates with people. In all, it's a pretty amazing experience."

Lowry was introduced to Phelps back in 1997, which led to Phelps' eventual hire. "A guy named David Estes at Word Records called me and heard that we were looking for a tenor," Lowry said. "David had come in to Word and sang for them and thought he might be a good fit. I was going to be passing by Word at that time. I told him to tell him to be there in 20 minutes. I thought he was good. Bill said, 'Well, have him make a cassette tape of some of our stuff,' like 'The King Is Coming.' He did. Guy (Penrod, the group's lead singer at the time) and I went over and met David at his house and sang with him to see how that would go."



Phelps was leaning more toward a contemporary career at the time. "I grew up in a family where our musical style was pretty eclectic, everything from '80's rock to classic country and definitely gospel," Phelps said. "I fell in love with Contemporary Christian- It was Amy Grant, Russ Taff. I had recorded an independent project that was contemporary. In all of my growing-up years, people were telling me, 'You need to get hooked up with the Gaithers.' I never knew how to make that happen. I just keep singing. I had moved to Nashville. We were here about six months. I was still traveling (for concerts). It was difficult as a relatively unknown artist. I was in the middle of talks with a record label to do my first national release. One of the gentlemen there said, 'Hey, did you know that the Vocal Band is looking for a new tenor?' Jonathan Pierce had left. I said, 'If you could make an audition happen, I would love to have a chance at that.' Mark Lowry was on that label too. It was Word. He came up and listened."

Gaither added, "Mark Lowry had brought me a CD, and we were going on a cruise. We were looking for a tenor at the time. I asked Mark to tell him to go into

the studio with just him and his voice. He did. We were overwhelmed."

Phelps was not overly familiar with Southern Gospel Music at the time. "I didn't really know what Southern Gospel was," Phelps said. "My family used to sing four-part harmony. I knew those things. I just didn't know the industry as a whole. I was just doing my own thing. I was just kind of who I was. I am so grateful that Southern Gospel Music has embraced me. I have fallen in love with the icons of Southern Gospel Music. It was fantastic to get to know Vestal Goodman and Jake Hess. This music has people like no other genre. I had heard of Michael English and the Vocal Band, but I had lost track of the Vocal Band a little after Michael left. I had heard the songs that had come out of Southern Gospel. Stylistically, it really is such a wide range. Southern Gospel has embraced the Gaither stuff, which has a country flair to more of a Contemporary style at times."

Phelps joined the Vocal Band in July of 1997. "It's truly affirming," Phelps said. "That's an important element to any artist's journey. People ask me all of the time, 'How do I get started in this? What is the magic pill?' There is no magic pill. John Bisagno, who was a minister of music in Houston, gave me the best advice I ever got. I'm 6-foot-1, and my face was at his chest. He said, 'Sing everywhere you can.' That's still the best advice I've ever been given. The people that end up doing this persevere."

Phelps continued, "You learn from it. You learn what works and what doesn't work, how far to push your voice, what to say on stage, what not to say on stage. The most important element of that is you learn to love what you do no matter whether the crowd is there or not. It's about creating the art of what we do in the moment and creating the joy for people. What I've learned over the course of my career is it's not always about the lyric. In Southern Gospel, we have lyric that is not only theologically and doctrinally sound, but it's also in music itself. God created music. Beauty is in and of itself something that glorifies the Lord."

Gaither added, "Everything is timing. A lot of people ask me what it takes. You have to have talent. You have to have training. You have to have a great deal of perseverance ... but sometimes, it's just timing."

Phelps left the Gaither Vocal Band in 2005 to pursue a solo ministry. "Before I left the Vocal Band, my goal was to define myself as an artist individually," Phelps said. "I had actually gone to Bill and Barry (Jennings,



the president of the Gaither Music Group) and said, 'While I love being known as the tenor for the Vocal Band, I want your help in helping me define myself as an artist.' They said, 'Well, it's about time you asked.' Bill is a big part of my solo stuff. I had begun that road before I left. There were some difficult years in my solo work. To go from the first one (his self-titled project released in 2001) with 'No More Night' and 'End of the Beginning,' then, to go to Revelation, I don't know whether it is Contemporary or whether it is Southern Gospel or if it's just artistic. People would come to my concerts thinking they were going to get Vocal Band songs. That's just not what I was as a solo artist. I still choose songs that fit me in both places."



Phelps continued, "When I left the Vocal Band, I really left for a few different reasons. No. 1, my family, we vowed that we were not going to let this career rule everything. My kids were growing up, and they were wanting me in their lives more than I was able to be. The other part was I was finding conflict in defining myself as an artist. Those three years were an incredible growth period for me."

Phelps performed almost as many solo dates as he did with the Gaither Vocal Band in 2013. "The beautiful thing about artistry is it comes in all different packages," Gaither said. "The thing that makes the Vocal Band special is we have all this different talent. We use as many different approaches as we can to do what we do."

Phelps added, "It's both satisfying and challenging. I

am such an eclectic artist by nature. Doing the solo concerts really gives me a couple of different vehicles to drive. That's very, very cool. I did two Vocal Band dates and two solo dates one week. They feed each other. Bill has been great to encourage that. Even in the days when we were doing 90 dates (each year) and singing for 18,000 people, he's always been encouraging for the individual artists to go out and do what they do."

So, what brought Phelps back to the group? "By that third year, I was having a great time," Phelps said. "We were having growth. Then, Bill called and said, 'I want you to come meet with me and talk about coming back to the Vocal Band.' I am never going to turn down

Bill for coffee. I talked to Lori, and we both agreed that this is probably not the right thing. We just didn't feel that this is the right thing to go back. I went and met with him, and in the first five minutes ... I mean immediately ... I was like, 'God is doing something.' I left there, and came home and talked to Lori. I told her that God is moving there. For the next couple of weeks, we prayed about it and talked about it. I told him that I would be happy to come back."

Phelps, English and Lowry joined Gaither and Hampton. "He's really become a great friend," Hampton said. "I'm so thankful that he came back. I think some people were like, 'what's it going to be like with two tenors now.' It has been a wonderful relationship for us."

Phelps has extended some advice to Hampton, though only when it's solicited. "He's given me insight with stuff he has experienced, personal things he's learned and just life in general," Hampton said. "He really is like a big-brother figure to me. He's helped me understand my voice a little better. It's taking more ownership in my part. I'm taking more ownership and more authority when I'm singing stuff. That's largely because of him."

While part of a vocal ensemble surrounded by talent, Phelps' fellow group members are continually impressed by his vocal abilities." I asked him one time, 'what is your high note,'" Lowry said. "He said, 'well, I don't like to go any higher than E.' I was like, 'I don't think you'll need that.' Michael English is one that moves me. David is so impressive. His voice is so stunning. Michael is equally stunning in a different way. Sandi Patty is another. There aren't many (like that). It's



amazing to watch.”

His consistency is another impressive aspect for his groupmates. “I have never heard a tenor who could do it that long and do it with the intensity and power he has,” Gaither said. “His training has paid off. Singing in that range is not easy, but he has the tones of a baritone. He’s one of a kind. The fact that he can do it every night is amazing. I’m very grateful he found us.”

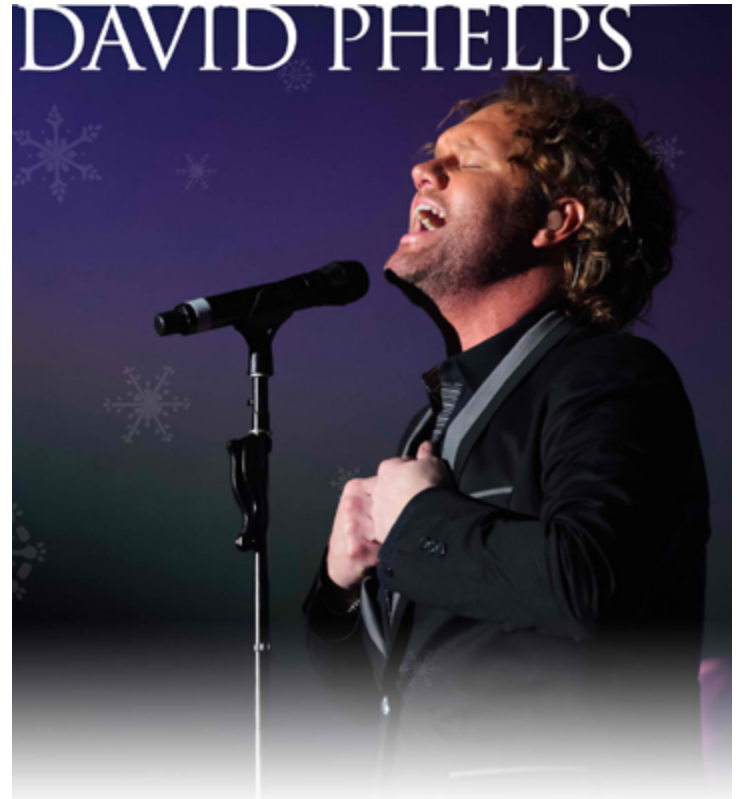
Hampton added, “It’s crazy. Marshall Hall (the group’s former baritone singer) and I were talking (recently), and David’s name came up. He can tell his voice to do whatever he wants it to do, and he can. He’s always been known for his high notes, but he’s really a baritone who has developed an amazing tenor range. He has a low speaking voice. His range is impressive. He’s freakish. He knows his voice so well. It really is crazy.”

Hampton has a unique take on one of the reasons for Phelps’ powerful vocal ability. “He really is amazing,” Hampton said. “He and I joke around about it. He said he has a really large head. He tells me he can’t find hats big enough. He has a lot of space in that big head for that resonance to develop. God created him to be a singer.”



The group is currently in a transition phase as both English and Lowry have performed their final dates. “It’s easily a third of our life that we are spending out there on the road,” Phelps said. “It’s family. You get to that comfort level. That is always hard to let go of. It is the nature of this world. Nothing lasts forever. You have to say ‘What’s the next stage?’ The next stage has the

potential to be better than we never dreamed. You have to say, ‘What is around the corner?’ You never know what’s in store for you on the next step.”



The 44-year-old Tomball, Texas, native is excited about those possibilities. “We’re going to be bringing in two new members,” Phelps said. “That changes everything. We’re saying, ‘What is this going to be like?’ I’m of the thought – and so is Bill – that the personnel of the group defines who the group is. Whoever we bring in will definitely help define the group. That’s exciting.”

Phelps added, “We have a new Vocal Band project that we are finishing up for the old group that is a hymns project. We’re working on that. We’ll have a video sometime in the next year and a new project. We’re all very excited about what the new personalities will breathe into that.”

Lowry added, “Bill Gaither is not slowing down. He’s speeding up.”

The Gaither Vocal Band’s latest project is *Pure and Simple*, a 2012 release. “My favorite Vocal Band stuff is the one where it’s the piano and the vocal group, like ‘That Sounds Like Home To Me’ ... or ‘Lord Feed Your Children,’” Phelps said. “I love that one. I love the three-part harmony, making it work on the spot. That feeds me.”

Phelps’ latest solo project was also released in 2012, entitled *Classic*. That came two years after Phelps



recorded *Family Band*. Phelps wrote six of the songs on *Family Band*, a project in which he is joined by his sister (Sherri Proctor) and friend Jack Daniels. "I've worked to surround myself with family," Phelps said. "My sister sang with me for years out on the road. Jack is my music director. I have another sister who plays classical trumpet professionally. My daughters (Callie and Maggie Beth) travel and sing with me when they are able to do so. It's mainly Sherri, Jack and myself. It was a true labor of love and a joyful experience to put that down."

Phelps continued, "As a soloist, I've been doing the *Classic* stuff quite a bit, as well as the stuff that I have done in my career from 'End of the Beginning' to 'No More Night' to 'Arms Open Wide.' 'Nessun Dorma' was a real bench mark for me in my solo career. PBS (the Public Broadcasting Service) has opened its arms to me. That's amazing to me. We're going to explore that more and just walk through the doors God has opened in front of us."

In addition to his writing capabilities, Phelps also does production and vocal work in recording studios. He has recently been working on upcoming projects

from Hampton, Charlotte Ritchie and the Martins (who are recording an A Cappella project). There are also some other elements to Phelps – who lives on an old dairy farm near Nashville, Tenn., with his wife and four children (including two sons, Grant and Coby) – that most individuals aren't aware of.

"He's a rancher," Lowry said. "He has a farm. He has horses. He's a good dad, a good husband, and he's extremely funny. He's one of the funniest people I've ever been around."

Hampton added, "I think a lot of people feel like he's shy. As a fan before I joined the group, he seemed kind of guarded on stage from a fan perspective. He's a private person, but in getting to sing with him for six years, he's one of the funniest people I've ever known. He's also a very compassionate person. I think you can hear that in his voice when he sings. He's very compassionate and giving person."

For more information on David Phelps, visit: <http://www.davidphelps.com/>.

The graphic features a background of a dramatic, cloudy sky at sunset or sunrise. On the left, the name "John Randolph" is displayed in a large, serif font, with a circular logo containing the letters "JR" and a cross. Below this is a photo of John Randolph playing an acoustic guitar, with the album title "Soakin' Up The Son" written in a script font. At the bottom left, there are logos for "Available on iTunes" and "cd baby". On the right, a rounded rectangular box contains the following text:

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## JANUARY 2014 TOP 100 CHART

This chart was compiled from a list of reporting stations. Each month we will be adding more stations.

1.	Triumphant Quartet	Because He Loved Me	43.	Guy Penrod	Leaning On The ...
2.	Steeles	But God	44.	Gibsons	He Lifted Me
3.	Browns	Rock and Redeemer	45.	Chuck Compton	Loose Him
4.	Hyssongs	God's In Control	46.	Old Paths	He's My Song
5.	Talleys	Up Above	47.	Sheri LaFontaine	Shine Like The Star
6.	Greater Vision	Preacher Tell It...	48.	Legacy Five	Living In The Palace
7.	Hoskins	Whenever I Hear..	49.	Ivan Parker	Sail On
8.	Gold City	Footprints On The...	50.	Sould Out	Thank You Lord
9.	Karen Peck & NR	Revival	51.	Dennis Family	Joy
10.	Whisnants	He Can Move That....	52.	Hoppers	He Didn't Just carry..
11.	Booth Brothers	I See Grace	53.	11 <sup>th</sup> Hour	Wake The Land
12.	McKameys	Hold On	54.	Georgia	His Cross
13.	Kingdom Heirs	The Borrowed Tomb	55.	Davis Family	Jesus Is Enough
14.	Brian Free	Nothing But Love	56.	Guardians	Let The Healing Begin
15.	LeFevres	But For The Cross	57.	Keith Barkley & Fam	Just In Time
16.	Inspirations	I'll Never Get Over It	58.	Rick Webb Fam	Let The Church Roll..
17.	Bowling Fam	Somebody's Believing	59.	Zack and Rodney	The Cookes & The Hins.
18.	Carolina Boys	One More Goliath	60.	Carrol Roberson	Life
19.	Poet Voices	Love Of Christ	61.	Devin McGlamery	In The Depth Of The..
20.	Nelons	More Than Wonderful	62.	Primitives w Archie...	When I Get Home
21.	Tribute QT	God's Gonna Send..	63.	Driven	I Would Not be...
22.	Barry Rowland	We'll Go Down...	64.	Tribute	Good News From Je..
23.	Taylors	Oh I Want to see Him	65.	Zane and Donna King	Shine
24.	Browders	Lift Up His Name	66.	Allen Fam	There's Life In The Stor...
25.	Browders	He's Alive	67.	Hope's Journey	Look What God Is doi..
26.	Cathedral	We'll Work	68.	Michael Wayne Smith	Just About Home
27.	Devin McGlamery	From Rags To Riches	69.	The Littles	First Day Forever
28.	Mark Bishop	It Wouldn't Bother Me..	70.	Lumber River	He Didn't Have To love..
29.	Mar Trammel QT	Wonderful Time Up..	71.	Mylon Hayes	Jesus Can Save your..
30.	New Ground	Homeland	72.	Pauline Patterson	I Know The Man
31.	Tammy Robinette	I've Got It All	73.	Weston & Christy Hinson	Finally Home
32.	Tony Gore	Pray For Me	74.	Caballero	I need You
33.	Wilburn & Wilburn	A Man Like Me	75.	Freemans	Lead Me Home
34.	Lore	Just Beyond	76.	Jeff and Sheri Easter	A Little Bit OF Sunshi..
35.	Perrys	The Blood and It's ..	77.	Erwins	Basics Of Life
36.	Canton Junction	Sweeter As The Days...	78.	Galloways	Till The Storm Passes By
37.	Kingdom Heirs	Just Beyond The Sunset	79.	Michael And Delilah	A Place For us
38.	James and Jeff Easter	Way Up On The MTN	80.	Steve Ladd	Master Of The Wind
39.	Gibsons	Reminded Of His Grace	81.	Childress Fam	Glorious Tomorrow
40.	Dixie Echoes	Close To The Master	82.	Declaration Trio	It Wasn't Me
41.	Wisecarvers	I need You	83.	Paul's Journey	Come Dirty Leave Clean
42.	Crist Family	The Closer I get to the..	84.	Mike Upright	Love Will Make You..

- |      |                   |                            |
|------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 85.  | Bledsoes          | The Blood Of Jeus          |
| 86.  | Nerkhorns         | Leave You Past At Jesus..  |
| 87.  | Old Paths         | Long Live King Jesus       |
| 88.  | Jay Stone Singers | Don't Say I'm Dead         |
| 89.  | Spoken 4 QT       | I Know I'm Going Home      |
| 90.  | Stephens          | Unclouded Day              |
| 91.  | Booth Brothers    | What The World Needs..     |
| 92.  | Voices One        | I Have Decided To Follow.. |
| 93.  | Beyond The Ashes  | Walking With My Eyes....   |
| 94.  | Hayes Family      | He Brought Me Out          |
| 95.  | His Heart QT      | Makin A New Start          |
| 96.  | Men Of Music      | Songs We Use To Sing       |
| 97.  | Red Roots         | Seven Days                 |
| 98.  | Arenos            | Walk The Talk              |
| 99.  | Marty Rabon       | More Jesus                 |
| 99.  | Gordon Mote       | Faith Like That            |
| 99.  | East Ridge Boys   | Some Day                   |
| 99.  | Steve Hess and SS | I'm Going Home             |
| 100. | Anchormen         | Borrowed And Barely Used.. |



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# Music Reviews for January

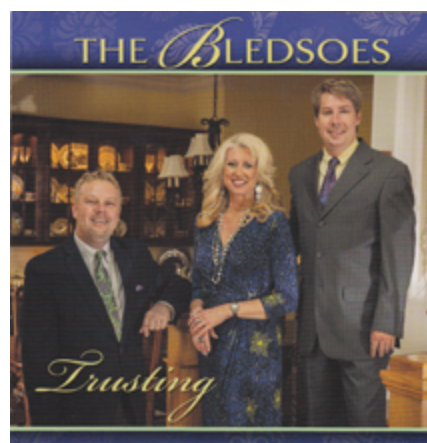
by Sandi Duncan Clark

God's blessings are new every morning, and as we enter the New Year, we anticipate 365 days of God's choice blessings! I do hope that your holiday season has been exactly what you wanted and that you celebrated the true joy of the season; the day we mark the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. During the year of 2013 we were privileged to bring you news of a number of recordings from some dedicated artists, and as we enter this New Year, we have more exciting music to report to you. I hope you are checking out the music we introduce each month, and support the artists in their work to spread the Gospel.

Over the past few months we have received a number of recordings and again, we ask that you be patient as we endeavor to share each one.

They definitely are all worth the listen.

We wish you a Happy New Year from the Clarks to you and your family. May God grant you His continued grace and mercy and you choose to serve Him faithfully.



## TRUSTING

The Bledsoes  
Independent

Producer: Rodney Bledsoe

Great harmony, eleven wonderful songs, impressive music tracks and arrangements are a gift from North Carolina's Bledsoes. With more than thirty years of history in Southern Gospel music, this trio has perfected their sound and style and comfortably shares it with us.

'Heaven Will Be Worth It All' is the first cut on the album and the Bledsoes do a wonderful job on this. Rodney Bledsoe co-wrote three songs and is featured on 'While In The Fire.' This is a song with great consolation for the Christian that no matter what our situation, God is in control.

'No Other Name' is an amazing song and the Bledsoes version features the sweet vocals of Melissa Harding. Their blend is smooth, with modern chord progressions in the arrangement.



Group member Robert Freeman comes back with another great song, 'That's What's So Amazing About Grace,' singing with conviction and proficiency.

The Bledsoes play list on the recording has several songs written by Cathy McDaniels, and one of my favorite songs is 'Standing Firm.' I like this one for the upbeat tempo as well as the message. I would also love to hear the trio add more up-tempo songs to their repertoire, to mix it up a little.

Over all, I rank this album among the best I've heard recently. Group members care about their music and this is indicated in their performance. I recommend TRUSTING by The Bledsoes, and you may contact them at 336-386-8002.



BACK ON THE WHEEL  
The Parish Family  
Heartwarming Records  
Producer: Mark Carman

If you are a fan of Country Gospel music, you will enjoy The Parish Family. I was inspired by Ronnie, Kesha and Mark Parish and their testimony in these songs. It has been said that the song writer can always do the best job singing his own songs, and it proves true in this family, as most of their music is original.

Many of the cuts they have written and recorded came from a time of deep feelings the family experienced when Ronnie and Kesha lost a baby girl. In dealing with their grief, their songs have touched the lives of others who have experienced the loss of a child.

'That's My God' is a medium tempo song with

the emphatic message that "another miracle is performed; another prayer is answered; another healing is accomplished...that's our God and that's what He does." What a wonderful reminder that our God knows the need even before we experience it!

'Pull Them From The Fire' was written by Kesha Parish and she certainly owns this one. It has a unique melody and a strong message and Kesha does a great job delivering it. Kesha is also featured on Michael Combs 'They'll Never Take My Jesus Out Of My Heart.'

The trio treats Dottie Rambo's ('In The Valley) He Restoreth My Soul' to a different arrangement rather than the traditional one. The play list features six more original songs, all encouraging for any listener and with promises for anyone seeking answers for problems they encounter or for those who are looking for the one true answer; Jesus Christ.

Contact The Parish Family at 229-861-2917 to experience their testimonies and their music.



MY GOD IS FAITHFUL  
Chronicle  
Resting Place Music  
Producer: Ricky Atkinson

Chronicle is a mixed trio; Greg Sullivan, Missy Kinchen and Tim Kinchen hailing from the great state of Louisiana. They travel extensively throughout the Southeast, sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ in their Southern Gospel music. Each member is an accomplished singer and all are featured at some point on a song. They

each can sing strong harmony when not doing a solo feature. Tim is a talented saxophone player and uses this talent on stage to compliment the group's music tracks.

Kicking off an exciting album is 'The Lambs Gonna Leave His Throne' written by Missy Kinchen and featuring Tim's sax on a superb intro. Another good song featuring Tim on the intro is 'One Drop' written by Greg and Missy. The message is clear and harmony is good.

This trio does a great job on their own arrangement of Dottie Rambo's 'Remind Me Dear Lord.' Greg Sullivan's solid lead vocals are featured on this one. Tim takes the lead on Colbert and Janice Croft's 'I Believe When He Died' and does an excellent job on this song. He often sounds a lot like Kenny Hinson.

This recording is a variety of smooth Southern Gospel with excellent vocals. It has a touch of jazz sax to enhance the music. I'm sure you'll be hearing more from Chronicle in the future. Contact 985-507-9432 or 225-270-6192 for a copy of MY GOD IS FAITHFUL.



I'M NOT THAT WAY ANYMORE  
Wes McMillian  
Independent

Country Gospel singer Wes McMillian wrote eight of the ten songs on this recording. His music is entertaining for any fan who enjoys Gospel lyrics with country music. The title song, 'I'm Not That Way Anymore' is a testimony of a man whose life is totally changed by God's grace.

'Joy Ride' talks about the joy one feels as they

travel this journey as a Christian. It's an up-tempo song that will have you tapping your toes to the rhythm. 'For The Life Of Me' slows the pace and ponders how God would freely give His Son to save the world.

Other good songs are 'How Much You Love Me' and 'Ain't Nothing Gonna Happen Today,' both written by Wes. A country version of Squire Parsons' 'Sweet Beulah Land' is very well done, with mandolin and acoustic guitar accompaniment.

'The Blood Says You Can,' written by Aaron Wilburn and Dave Lehman has a prodigal son theme, and is another song arranged to suite Wes McMillian's country vocals. Wes McMillian wisely uses instruments which mix well with his country vocals to present his message in song. You may contact Wes at [www.wesmcmillian.com](http://www.wesmcmillian.com) to secure your copy of his recording or to schedule him for your next event.\_



THAT'S WHY WE'RE HERE  
The Whisnants  
Producers: Mylon Hayes & The Whisnants

The Whisnants perform traditional Southern Gospel music with anointing, giving it their own personal style and interpretation. This combination has been successful for more than 30 years, garnering them ten Number 1 songs, if my count is correct. They continue to score heavy airplay and win fans throughout the country. Each member of this talented family has a testimony for God, and willingly gives of themselves in true dedication to their music ministry.

Every song on the recording is something you will enjoy. One that especially touched my heart is

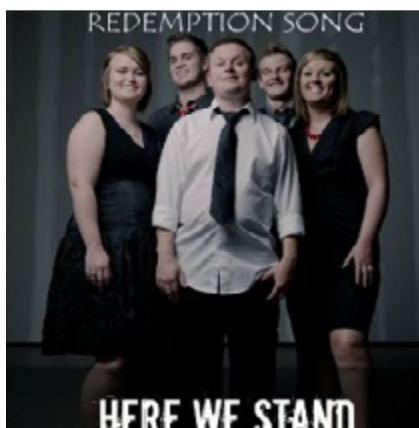


'Because You Gave.' As the daughter of a pastor, I can relate to the message, and my sweet Dad, who is at home with Jesus now, would love it. Susan Whisnant was one of his favorite singers and this would be his favorite song on the recording.

The album seems to have our heavenly home as the theme, and 'We'll Meet Again,' 'Glory Bound,' 'Press Along to Glory Land' and 'We're Going Home' all have that theme. 'I Will Live' speaks to the fact that because He died, we will live, another song about what awaits the Saints of God. Amen! This latter song was written by two of my favorite song writers, Rebecca Peck and Dianne Wilkinson. They also wrote 'That's Why I'm Here,' from which the album title is taken. Dianne partnered with Amber Eppinette to give us the afore mentioned 'We're Going Home.'

Having met the Whisnants when Jeff's mother and father were with the group, my heart has been saddened over the holidays, with the passing of his father, John Whisnant Sr. This album speaks to the fact that we have the assurance we will go 'home' to meet him. Our deepest sympathies go out to the Whisnant Family during their time of sorrow and we ask that you continue to pray for their family.

You will want to add THAT'S WHY WE'RE HERE to you music library. Contact the Whisnants at 828-584-4118.



HERE WE STAND  
Redemption Song  
BCS Records  
Producer: Mike Bailey

Alabama's Redemption Song is a wonderful young mixed quartet and they will bless you with ten pure Southern Gospel songs. Four part harmony is clean and clear, and even though this is a young group of singers, each member has a history in Gospel music. I think I can safely say these young people not only grew up with a strong Southern Gospel influence, they probably all grew up singing out of the old Red Backed Hymnal!

Several well-known and favored Gospel songs are sung very well by this young quartet. 'Jesus Is Coming Soon,' 'The Unseen Hand,' 'I Found The Way' are songs we've all sung at some point. I love hearing Trent Adams singing a bass solo on 'Sinner Saved By Grace!'

The quartet sings an old convention style song, 'Happy Am I' with gusto and each singer sings their part to perfection. Hannah Martin is featured on Dottie Rambo's 'He looked Beyond My Faults,' doing a beautiful job, and the quartet again sings an old convention song, 'They Shall Walk Me In White.'

If we aren't hearing good things from Redemption Song in 2014, I'll be really surprised. Contact them for you copy of HERE WE STAND by calling 770-317-0376.



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# YOUNGER PERSPECTIVE

## Suzanne Hise

BY ERIN STEVENS

Such a joy it is to kick off a brand new year here at SGN Scoops, as I sat down with the lovely, Suzanne (Taylor) Hise this month to discuss her life on the road. I trust you will enjoy taking a closer look into the heart of this precious woman of God. Suzanne, take it away...

Erin: At what point in life did you feel the call into music ministry?

Suzanne: Singing was always my dream. I never imagined that God would call me into a ministry of music. I did not grow up with Gospel music, rather Contemporary music, however, my mom had me sing in every possible cantata at our church. In 2005, a group called The Morris Trio came to our church. It was my first exposure to Gospel music. It was at that moment that I realized God could use me the same way. It was a dream and a call that came true in 2006 when I joined my sister and two brothers to form our group, The Taylors.

Erin: How have you and Aaron managed to juggle two full-time ministries, while loving life together as newlyweds?

Suzanne: Well, I have to say, it has been a challenge with two different schedules to keep up with. However, we both love our music ministries and we love each other. Because we both sing for a living, I believe God gave us each other so that we could be understanding and patient with one another when we have hectic schedules. And we like to joke about it and say that we can never get tired of each other or have time to fight!

Erin: Who has been your biggest musical

influence thus far?

Suzanne: I have to say I am in awe of the talent of The Collingsworth Family. Through the years of knowing them, and watching them sing, they bring true talent and humbleness to the stage!

Erin: Is there one particular concert that holds great value to you personally? Why?

Suzanne: I mentioned earlier that my first exposure to Gospel music was The Morris Trio coming to my church in 2005. So I have to say that first concert for me was the most profound. It was



an experience that I will never forget. The lyrics of Gospel songs are what drew me in. It was so relevant to my life. It was then that I realized that these words can speak to everyone that hears them. It was awesome to grasp that in my mind and it truly gave me hope and peace.

Erin: When you're off the road, what would you usually be found doing?

Suzanne: Watching a movie! I love to get home, put my pajamas on, and rent a good movie.

Erin: What would you consider the pros and cons are of traveling with your siblings? (Be honest!)

Suzanne: The pros would definitely be that they are just that...my family! It's a joy to just be ourselves on the bus. I love my brothers, we are close, but I can honestly say that my sister is my best friend. We talk about everything! The cons? Well, let's just say we don't always see eye to eye...but we always learn to come to a compromise.

Erin: Being a young woman in ministry, what are some struggles you have faced while living life on the road?

Suzanne: Well, I pack more and I am usually the last one off the bus when it comes time to sing. Everyone likes to tease me for those two things. But on a more serious note, I think my biggest struggle would be the fact that I use my emotions way too much to determine my happiness in a day. Being on the road seems to enhance those feelings, so I've had to learn to be more protective of my feelings and learn to keep them in check. If not, by the end of a weekend I'm totally drained!

Erin: All Gospel singers have to be asked this question - what is your all-time favorite food?

Suzanne: Japanese! I could eat it every day!

Erin: What is your life-verse? And why?

Suzanne: Mark 10:29-30 because it says, "And Jesus answered and said, Verily I say unto you, There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the Gospel's, but he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life." I love my family, and I rely on this verse when I start to miss them on a long trip from home. It brings to light the

faithfulness of living the life of which you are called and the blessing you will receive for the things you have left to do His will.

Erin: If there was one moment in life you could relive, what would it be?

Suzanne: Meeting my husband! I can remember walking up to his booth at NQC, just simply saying, 'Hi.' There was something about him that drew me in saying, "Just tell him your whole life story." He had that kind of nature - trustworthy and sincere. I enjoyed getting to know him and still love getting to know him more and more each day! That day, and the day we got married. I could relive those days over and over again.

Erin: I'm sure all the ladies reading would like to know what is the total number of your growing high heel collection?

Suzanne: Oh well, that's a tough one...I guess it's enough to say that I can't count them all in my head! I just have a lot of shoes!

Erin: If you had one opportunity to tell someone about the Lord, what would you say?

Suzanne: I would say, "God has been so good to me, would you like to know Him too? Even in my darkest days, He has proven to be faithful and ever true to me." I would want them to feel the deep passion I carry for Him and share the goodness of His promises. I would want them to know about heaven and how easy it is to accept Christ, follow Him, and receive eternal life. It is the greatest gift of all.

Erin: Any final words of encouragement you would like to leave the readers with?

Suzanne: Hold your head high, and trust in the Lord at all times. He will never let you down!

I don't know about you, but I have certainly come away from reading this young lady's heartfelt words with a renewed encouragement in my heart for our Lord and Savior. I thank Him for allowing someone as equipped as Suzanne to carry out His message of mercy and grace week in and week out. Until next month, Scoops fans...

And that's my take on it.



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# The Old Path Quartet

## *Is On a Roll*

by Sandi Duncan Clark



When Tim Rackley and Doug Roark felt led by God to form a trio in 2003, their first thought was to find a name. Tim's father suggested The Old Paths, from the scripture in Jeremiah 6:16, "Seek ye the Old Paths and walk there in." That name expressed the group's desire to present the gospel in their services and concerts and the verse soon became their mission statement.

Their initial formation consisted of Tim, who sings lead, Doug, who filled the baritone spot and tenor Chad Dominicy. As time passed, God continued to bless the group, moving the right people into positions left available when personnel changes happened. These differences marked their progress with excitement and a fresh sound. In 2007, God sent Jeremy Peace to sing tenor, and two years ago Daniel Ashmore came on board singing bass.

They established a following with fans, with radio DJs and with industry and record company executives with powerful songs, solid vocals, testimonies and consistent faithfulness to their mission. In ten years the quartet released eleven recordings along with two Christmas albums.

The current front-line of the Old Paths Quartet is Tim Rackley, Doug Roark, Jeremy Peace and Daniel Ashmore, with Josh Townsend playing piano. Jeremy Chupp travels with the quartet as their sound engineer and drummer.

Occasionally Jeremy Peace and Jeremy Chupp, playing bass guitar and drums, respectively, join Josh Townsend to form a live band. Included in this live band is Daniel Ashmore and his tenor sax. Live music always excites Gospel music fans, and The Old Paths Band is a big hit with their followers.

The Old Paths Quartet seems to have been on a roll lately! Signing a recording agreement with Crossroads Music, one of Gospel Music's leading record companies, set the pace for two number-one songs, "Battlestand" and "God's Great," along with an appearance at the National Quartet Convention and being voted Singing News Favorite New Quartet. In 2013, the group received several NQC Music Awards and Singing News Fan Awards Nominations. The year 2013 also brought about their signing with Harper and Associates to a booking contract.

The excitement in the group not only focuses on their career achievements, but on their ministry mission and their spiritual lives. In a recent conversation, Jeremy Peace shared, "While we're called to minister with our music, we also have three preachers in the group. Shortly after I came to the group, I realized I didn't truly have a relationship with Christ, and that I was lost. Not long after professing my salvation, I surrendered to the call to preach. Doug Roark and Jeremy Chupp are also ministers," he informed. "Though we may not preach during our concerts, we will

often share our testimonies, as the Lord directs. We understand that people come to hear us sing, and yet if anyone comes forward for prayer, we are more than ready and willing to pray with them. We all have a strong desire to see lives changes through our efforts for God."

In speaking to Jeremy we learned the group is very selective with their music. "We are very cautious when we choose our music for our recordings and to present in concert," Jeremy stated. "As students of the Word, we want our presentation to be scripturally sound as well as lyrically sound. We don't want to sing just anything. Our desire is for the audience to be involved in the music. We are serious when we need to be and we have fun when we should."

The Old Paths keep a steady schedule, with a listed 200 dates for the year of 2013. This includes concert dates, evangelistic conferences and Sunday morning/evening worship services. "While our music ministry is important, our families are important to us and our ministry. We couldn't do this without family support and we consider this when we look at booking dates. Our schedule looks loaded at 200 dates a year, but it actually averages out to singing Saturday night and twice on Sunday," Jeremy explained. "It's our goal to stay busy, but that busy-ness includes taking care of our home life."

When the quartet is on the road, the men share their hearts and desires with each other. "We spend many hours traveling," Jeremy declares. "We are away from our home churches most every Sunday, so when we are home on Wednesday nights, that time becomes our family church night. Sometimes one of us preachers will take a preaching date on a Wednesday night if we get an invite. When we're traveling we might discuss our messages, or might talk about the place where we are scheduled to sing or something." He continued, "We feel comfortable with each other; we know what we believe and can share that and pray together about things. That draws us closer."

During the holidays, The Old Paths uses Christmas music in their concerts. "We also will do a complete Christmas program if the pastor desires that," Jeremy stated. "We sing Christmas carols, familiar Christmas songs, like "Walking In A Winter Wonderland", or any song they might want. We talk about the real meaning of Christmas."

The Old Paths have two Christmas recordings in their inventory. "Both were done prior to this year," Jeremy informed, "but they have all the good Christmas music you usually hear. The most current Christmas CD is *HIS NAME IS JESUS* and we use music from this in our concerts and services."

Speaking of Christmas, each of the members of this quartet shared their plans for Christmas.

Doug Roark and his wife Andrea have three children,



Douglas, Brandon and Brittany. Doug shared, "Christmas is such a special time for us. It is Andrea's favorite holiday so we get up very early, just like we did when the children were small. I like surprises and surprising everyone with special gifts. So we open presents, give thanks to the Lord for being the greatest Gift of all, and then it's off to the kitchen for a busy day of cooking and family time. Our home is filled with the smell of turkey, laughter and Christmas music. It just doesn't get any better."



Tim and Scarlett Rackley have two children, Brianna and Watters. Tim tells us, "The month of December is a big month for our family. Including Christmas, which is our favorite holiday, December is mine and my wife's anniversary month, and both of our children's birthday month. On Christmas Eve, we always have dinner and exchange gifts. We then have the kids read the Christmas story at my wife's parents' house. On Christmas morning we take time for devotion and prayer for everyone who is hurting and in



need during the Christmas season. Afterwards, the children get to tear into their gifts. The rest of the day we go to our families who all live close by. I even get to eat several pieces of my mother's red velvet cake! By the end of the day we are all tired and ready for bed. We settle in by praying and thanking the Lord for all He has provided us with during the year, and for being the reason we celebrated Christmas day."

long process with going to see my fiancé and going to see family. I have family in Mississippi that my fiancé and I are going to see the week before Christmas to celebrate with them. The week before that is the annual Old Paths Christmas Dinner and I will have everyone there with me. For Christmas day I will be in N.C. with my future wife and her family. I am very excited this time of year because I love Christmas and all that it means to me."



Jeremy and Jennifer Peace have two children, Abigail and Rachel, with another on the way. "The Peace family will spend Christmas this year together making home-made decorations, candies, and crafts. We plan on driving through the various neighborhoods gazing at Christmas lights, and enjoying small town parades. Our Christmas Eve will be spent with family and friends, and Christmas Day will be enjoyed at our home, together," Jeremy explained.



Jeremy and Rachel Chupp will be celebrating their first Christmas as husband and wife. "This will be a very special Christmas for my wife and me. On April 20th, 2013 I married the woman of my dreams, Rachel. This will be our first Christmas together. While we were dating we were unable to spend Christmas together because she was always visiting family in Texas. This will also be a special Christmas because we are expecting our first child. The day itself will be a busy one, trying to fit in seeing all of our family members. But the moment I am looking forward to the most will be waking up in our home on Christmas Day, and enjoying each other as we open presents and enjoy the true meaning of Christmas."



Daniel Ashmore and his Fiancé, Katelyn Maness, will be married in a few months, and shared their plans for this holiday season. "Christmas for me tends to be a month



As the newest member of The Old Paths Quartet, Josh Townsend is excited to be celebrating Christmas with the group. He states, "I'll be spending Christmas Eve and Christmas morning with my mom, grandparents, aunt, and family friends. We'll have dinner and open presents Christmas Eve followed by games and fellowship. Christmas morning



we'll have breakfast and visit until I leave for the airport at noon to fly back to Atlanta where I'll begin the New Year traveling with The Old Paths Quartet."



The Old Paths Quartet is excited about what God has in store for the New Year. Their current single, "Long Live The King" from their latest recording, *THESE TRUTHS*, is February's Number One new release. The Old Paths are scheduled to perform in several exciting venues this year including the Memphis Quartet Show and again on main-stage at the National Quartet Convention. Their excitement about the future increases as God continues to bless their music and their ministry. Be sure to visit with The Old Paths Quartet during the New Year whenever they come to your

area. You're sure to enjoy some superb Southern Gospel music and you will fall in love with the men who present it, their testimonies and their personalities.

Visit their website at [www.theoldpathsonline.com](http://www.theoldpathsonline.com) for their complete schedule and information on their music. You can also keep up with what's happening for this very talented quartet.

#### Editor's Note

We sincerely apologize to the Old Paths Quartet for publishing the incorrect version of their article last month! We've already apologized in person, and they graciously accepted our apology, but we want our readers to have the latest and most current information on the Old Paths Quartet. We appreciate these guys and all the hard work they're doing for the Kingdom of God.

A promotional graphic for Rhonda Frye. On the right is a close-up portrait of a woman with blonde hair, blue eyes, and a warm smile, wearing a red and white beaded necklace. On the left, the text "Rhonda Frye" is written in large, bold, red letters. Below this, the words "SINGER", "SONGWRITER", and "SPEAKER" are stacked in a smaller, black, sans-serif font. At the bottom, a white rectangular box contains the website address "WWW.RHONDAFRYE.COM" in black, bold, sans-serif capital letters. The background of the text area is a soft, out-of-focus grey.



# FEATURED GROUPS FOR JANUARY

Support Southern Gospel music and support these groups the next time they're in your area.



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## Calvarys Mercy

<http://www.calvarysmercy.org>

## City on a Hill Quartet

<http://www.cityonahillquartet.com>

## Curtis Pruett

<http://www.curtispruettsr.com>

## Divine Mercy

<http://www.divinemercysingers.com>

## Express Praise

<http://www.expresspraise.webs.com>

## Final Hour Productions

<http://www.gospelgigs.com/bobetzel>

## Four The Cross

<http://www.gospelgigs.com/4thecross>

## Full Life Trio

<http://www.fulllifetrio.com>

## Gospel Messengers

<http://www.gospelmessengersministries.org>

## Hearts Desire

<http://www.heartsdesireministries.com>

## The Helmsmen

<http://www.thenewhelmsmen.com>

## The Heritage Quartet

<http://www.theheritagequartet.com>

## The Inmans

<http://www.theinmans.com>

## Jeff Steinberg Ministry Team

<http://www.TinyGIANT.com>

## Jim Sheldon

<http://www.jimsheldonmsic.com>

## LeFevre Quartet

<http://www.thelefevrequartet.com>

## Living Fountains

<http://www.gospelgigs.com/livingfountains>

## Lumber River Quartet

<http://www.lumberriverministries.com>

## MARK 209

<http://www.Mark209.com>

## The Masters Men + 1

<http://www.mastersmenquartet.com>

## Masters Promise

<http://www.masterspromise.com>

## One Way Quartet

<http://www.onewayquartet.org>

## Persuaded

<http://www.youtube.com/user/PersuadedVideo>

## Persuaded One

<http://www.gospelgigs.com/persuadedone>

## Roger Wells Ministries

[www.rogerwellsministries.com](http://www.rogerwellsministries.com)

## Southern Plainsmen Quartet

[www.southernplainsmen.com](http://www.southernplainsmen.com)

## Steve Lawson

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# Smart-er Goals for 2014

By Laurette Willis, CHC

Photo Courtesy of Sir. Mo

*"Write the vision and make it plain on tablets, that he may run who reads it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time; But at the end it will speak, and it will not lie. Though it tarries, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry" (Habakkuk 2:2).*

**Where are you going?** Do you want to accomplish more "Godly Goals" in 2014 than you did in 2013? Do you want to be ALL the Lord is calling you to be in spirit, soul and body? You absolutely can!

But think, without goals, how will you know whether or not you are on the right track? How will you know if you are on the road to your destination if you don't recognize the sign posts along the way (smaller goals on the way to your larger goals)?

## **SMART-ER Goals to GUIDE You.**

We've heard of SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic and Time-bound). Here are SMART-ER goals which honor God and help keep you on track!

Your SMART-ER Goals involve these 7 Steps:

**S**-Seek God

**M**-Make a Commitment

**A**-Ask

**R**-(w)Rite the Vision

**T**-Thank God in Advance;

**E**-Expect and **R**-Receive

**S - Seek God.** Get in a quiet place and seek the presence of the Lord. Meditate on scriptures about the Lord and what He has said and promised--such

as *"I am the Lord that healeth thee;" "I am the way, the truth and the life;" "I will never leave you nor forsake you;"* and others.

*"Seek FIRST the kingdom of God and His righteousness and ALL these things will be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33).*

Not sure about your goals? Not sure what to do or what's right for you? Here's the answer: Worship the Lord! Amazing things happen to you when you do so!

Tell Him how much you love Him: *"I love You, Lord! I worship You! I adore You..." "Delight yourself also in the LORD, And He shall give you the desires of your heart" (Psalm 37:4).* When you invest time in your relationship with Him, He will show you His highest and best for you.

**Hint:** The goals God shows you will be in line with His Word in the Bible, and will always be greater than anything you could possibly do by yourself. Why? Our wonderful Lord wants to do these things with and through you!

You see, if you could accomplish your goals without Him, how would He receive any glory from it? How could your victories lead anyone to Him if you get all of the credit and the glory for it? *"God has chosen the foolish things of the world to put to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to put to shame the things which are mighty" (1 Corinthians 1:27).* Aren't you glad? I am!

**M - Make a Commitment.** Commit yourself to God. Let Him know you not only want the Lord's guidance, but that you will follow it, too.

*"Commit your works to the LORD, and your thoughts*

*will be established"* (Proverbs 16:3), and *"Commit your way to the LORD, Trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass"* (Psalm 37:5); and *"If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land"* (Isaiah 1:19).

**A - Ask** - We want to ask in line with God's will. Ask Him. Do you see a promise along those lines in the Bible? God's Word is God's will for us, so we have confidence when we ask in line with His Word (such as in areas of healing, restoration, ministry, marriage, prosperity, success, growing in the Lord, being all He's called you to be, etc.).

*"You have not because you ask not. You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures"* (James 4:2); and *"And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son"* (John 14:3).

**R - (w)Rite the Vision!** Write your goals down in each area.

*"Write the vision and make it plain on tablets, that he may run who reads it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time; But at the end it will speak, and it will not lie. Though it tarries, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry"* (Habakkuk 2:2).

**T - Thank God in Advance.** Thank the Lord for His guidance, direction, favor and the fulfillment of these goals.

*"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, **with thanksgiving**, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus"* (Philippians 4:6).

**E - Expect** *"Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him"* (1 John 5:14-15).

Expect MORE from God! Use what I call your "sanctified imagination" and SEE yourself doing those things that are your heart's desire. When a mother-to-be is "expecting" her baby, she does a lot of imagining of how wonderful it will be to hold her baby, sing to her baby, watch her baby grow...

Remember that God gave Abram (before he became "Abraham") an image to hold on to so he would

"see" God's plan for him. *"Then He brought him outside and said, 'Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them' And He said to him, 'So shall your descendants be'"* (Genesis 15:5).

God gave you an imagination to see His highest and best for you. Praise the Lord in it and see those good things coming to pass, for His glory!

**R - Receive** *"Whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you **receive** (the word in Greek is "TAKE") them, and you will have them"* (Mark 11:24).

Now Praise the Lord! Really! Thank Him in a BIG way. Start praising Him and thanking Him for answered prayer. "I thank You, Lord, that You have heard me and that we will reach these goals together. I praise You, I worship You, and I give you ALL the glory for what You are doing in my life!"

**Steps, not Leaps.**

God leads in steps, not leaps. In your quiet time, ask the Lord to show you the first "baby steps" toward the accomplishment of your goals. Write them down. Consult with the Lord Jesus all along the way.

Do the small steps and they will lead to more steps. These steps then become goals attained along the way to the accomplishment of your bigger goals.

One day at-a-time you will get there and be all the Lord has called you to be. I know it!

Make 2014 your year for SMARTER Goals that honor God and keep you on track with His perfect plan for you – guiding and guarding your ADVENTURE in Faith!

Check out Laurette's new book & DVD set from Destiny Image Publishers: *"40 Days to Fit & Fabulous with PraiseMoves."* Christian Fitness Expert and Certified Health Coach Laurette Willis is the Director of PraiseMoves Fitness Ministry with DVDs, Training, and Classes by Certified PraiseMoves Instructors on six continents (<http://PraiseMoves.com>). Get your free "5 Simple Steps to Looking and Feeling Fabulous" at <http://5StepsGuide.com>. ©2014





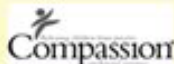
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## Round Two Going Well

By Craig Harris

Priorities thrust Chris Allman out of Greater Vision. Then, a lofty goal took him further away from Southern Gospel Music. However, the veteran tenor singer is enjoying his second stint as a part of the industry's most-awarded trio. "We're cut out of the same cloth when it comes to humor and personality," Allman said of the group members. "We laugh all the time. We've all grown up too."

Allman's circular path to once again stand next to baritone Rodney Griffin didn't have many stops.

In fact, Allman first performed a soloist for seven years after leaving Greater Vision in 1995, which was five years after the formation of the group. "I had three kids, and all were relatively young," Allman said. "It was tough on me being away from them."





During his tenure as a soloist, most of his performances took place on the weekends, and his family often traveled with him. However, it was while seated in a pew at a Bailey Smith Real Evangelism Bible Conference that Allman's path took a significant turn. "I heard Jerry Falwell preach a sermon that said, 'what is your BHAG (Big Hairy Audacious Goal),' " Allman said. "I already had the calling (to preach). I didn't know what to do. I didn't know whether to go to school. Right then, I figured out that my Big Hairy Audacious Goal was to build a church from the ground up."

Allman didn't waste any time. "I heard the sermon on a Friday," Allman said. "Me, my wife (Kimberly) and kids (Dustin, Jillian, Emory and Jules) started the Church in Burlington (North Carolina) at my house. The next Sunday, my youngest son (Emory, who was nine years old at the time) was out getting kids in the neighborhood to come. I basically preached to a bunch of kids. In three weeks, one of the kid's moms

came. We eventually outgrew the house and went to the YMCA. We stayed in the YMCA for two years. We grew from (an attendance of) 35 to right at 200."

Allman's father – Max Allman – served as a pastor for 32 years before he passed away approximately 12 years ago. "As far as pastoring, I said, 'I will never do that,'" Allman said. "My father was a pastor, and I saw what he dealt with. When God called me to do it, he literally changed my heart."

Allman pastored the church for eight years. "Looking at in respect, it blows me away that it happened," Allman said. "My wife Kimberly was a great pastor's wife. She had a great ladies ministry. It was by far the best ministry in the church. I couldn't have done any of that or any of this without her. It all happened very fast. To God be the glory."

However, Allman knew when his time in Burlington was coming to a close. "In November of 2009, I remember specifically telling my wife that my season was ending and that if God opened the door somewhere else that I was going to walk through it," Allman said. "It was a hard thing (leaving). I loved those people. That next March, I received a text (message) from Gerald (Wolfe, one of Greater Vision's founding members and lead singer)."

Timing was everything. A month before that text



message transpired, Greater Vision sang at Allman's church. "I jokingly said, 'if you ever need me, give me a call,'" Allman said. "On March 20, he texted. He said, 'Are you serious about ever moving back to Morris-town (located in East Tennessee)?' I said, 'yes.'"

It's boring. It's everything."

Both Griffin and Wolfe believe that Allman is better than ever vocally, and many Greater Vision fans agree, as evidenced by the reaction of audiences when Allman sings songs such as "I Know a Man Who Can" and



Allman succeeded Jacob Kitson, who was the group's tenor singer for approximately two years. "There's always uncertainty when you have change," Griffin – who joined Greater Vision when original baritone Mark Trammell left the group in 1993 to join the Gold City Quartet – said. "I breathed a sigh of relief. Even after 15 years, it's like he stepped off the bus and stepped right back on. It was easy to go back to the day-to-day living. "We just expected it to be an easy transition, and it has."

Wolfe added, "We had traveled together so long anyway. We knew we would get along. We're all older. Our kids are the same age. We knew it would work. It's by far the easiest (transition). Chris got back on the bus, and it's like we had all gotten off and gotten back on with gray hair."

While Allman's transition back into the group was relatively seamless, he had to adjust to once again being away from home, which is somewhat easier now that three of his four children are adults. "I love to be at home, and I love what I do," Allman said. "You can go sometimes so hard that you get physically and mentally worn. The first part of (2013) was like that. I was running on fumes. It's tiring. It's exhilarating. It's fun.

"Hallelujah Square." Wolfe said, "When he was here before, he was thinner. He has a broader tone now, and he blends better. It doesn't matter to him what time of day it is. He's the only tenor who wouldn't put song stipulations on you for a morning concert."

Griffin added, "It's just natural. When he wakes up, he can do that, and it appears he does it with ease. It looks effortless. He's like a workhorse, so you hand him the ball."

Allman has noticed that some elements of Southern Gospel music have evolved with the times since his earlier stint as one of Greater Vision's original members. "We are always trying our best to stay on the (cutting) edge when it comes to the next thing," Allman said. "Social media is a big deal now. We keep our Facebook stuff up to date. We keep our Twitter stuff up to date. We want to see this music survive, for it to be good and for it to do well."

Allman has written more than 100 songs, with approximately 25 of those being penned since he rejoined the group. Greater Vision has recorded approximately 12 Chris Allman songs during his second stint as the tenor singer, including four on the group's latest proj-



ect. "I enjoy the creative aspect of what we do," Allman said. "I write more now that I'm with the group. To hear that stuff leave the paper and go to the people is pretty neat ... to see how the people like it, how it affects them and how they respond."

Among Allman's hits are "I'm Free" (recorded by the Talleys), "I Could Never Praise Him Enough" (recorded by Greater Vision and the Collingsworth Family), "Another Child's Coming Home (Greater Vision) and "For All He's Done," which was the title cut of Greater Vision's 2013 Daywind release. Writing is actually an Allman family trait. Greater Vision recorded six songs written by Chris' sister – Robin Allman Riggins – in the 1990s, and the Anchormen, Booth Brothers and Kingdom Heirs all recorded Riggins' songs as well.

"My sister wrote, and I started singing with my sister and another guy out of our church," Allman said. "We recorded a couple of (cassette) tapes. She wrote, and I just wanted to write. I just couldn't. We had a leased bus one night (in the early 1990s). I went up front and sat in the buddy seat. I said, 'Gerald, I have something here.' He said, 'Do you want my honest opinion?' Of course, I did. He said, 'Either go back there and pray that God will give you the gift to write or quit.' I went back to my bunk and diligently prayed that. The next day, I heard a sermon from Ephesians 6. I wrote 'Just Stand' that day." "Just Stand" was the first song that Allman penned, and Greater Vision recorded it on its The King Came Down project in 1993.

Goals are still firmly in place for the 44-year-old Allman, though maybe not in the same big, hairy, audacious fashion. Songwriting does have a niche in his current list of goals. "I certainly do have goals that I have set for myself, but I wouldn't say that there's one big, hairy, audacious one," Allman said. "I believe a Big Hairy Audacious Goal speaks to one who is in the process of searching for a certain path in life. I'm very content with where I am at this point in my life. My goals these days have to do with things such as writing, pitching and having a certain amount of my music recorded. I set financial goals for myself and family as well, not so much regarding how much I can acquire, but what I can accomplish with what I have. I'm a Dave Ramsey junkie."



Southern Gospel Music Association Hall of Fame member Jack Pittman passed away December 30, 2013 at his home in Greenville, South Carolina.

Although Mr. Pittman is best known for his long tenure with the Palmetto State Quartet, his professional singing background began when he was hired by Frank Stamps to work for the Stamps Quartet Music Company. Jack sang with several quartets affiliated with the Stamps Music Company prior to joining the Palmetto State Quartet in the early 1950s. Mr. Pittman's affinity for gospel music and his desire to present a quality product to their fans resulted in the establishment of the Bob Poole Gospel Favorites TV Show. Jack personally sold advertisements to local businesses to establish this program which was soon syndicated nationally.

Mr. Pittman, in cooperation with Charles Waller, was also instrumental in establishing the first Grand Ole Gospel Reunion.

Mr. Pittman retired from the Palmetto State Quartet in 1997, but continued to support gospel music. He was inducted into the SGMA Hall of Fame in 2006.



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# Building a Better Country

Christian Country Pioneer

## Mike Manuel

Ready For Another Chapter

By: John Randolph



Country music has always been called the music of the heartland. It's music that has a way of grabbing your heartstrings and yanking on emotions that normally wouldn't come through. Whether it's the sounds that surround a Rascal Flatts hit like "Mayberry" that make you tap your foot and sing to the top of your lungs with the car windows rolled down, or a power ballad like Martina McBride's "Broken Wing" that can bring tears from the depths of your soul. Country music has always been a sound that can be described as an emotional roller coaster ride. And nobody understands the power of country music and its ability to change people more than one of Christian Country music's true pioneers, Mike Manuel.

Born in the Southeast Texas town of Shepherd outside of Houston, Mike and the rest of the Manuel family were raised on the sounds of Merle Haggard, Marty Robbins, George Jones and other true country music legends. Mike's father Gerald spent many of Mike's early years singing in some of the same venues that the aforementioned legends spent time. At one point, he shared the stage with Elvis Presley. All of this took a different turn in 1971 when the entire Manuel Family – led by their father Gerald – surrendered their lives and music to Christ. What followed for many years was a path of serving God the only way they knew how – by singing country music.

"After we gave our hearts to Christ, Dad continued doing what he had been doing and that was singing. The only difference was Dad wasn't in bars anymore but churches. We took the music we knew and the few songs that we could sing in a church setting that were truly country music and sang those," Mike explained as we talked about his musical life and journey recently. "We'd also take some



country songs everyone knew and change the words up so that they could be sung in church.”

Those early years singing with his family were the training ground that God used to work in Mike’s heart to understand what God expects of His servants. “There’s so much truth about how those early years of singing teach you a lot about who you are and what you are musically when you serve God,” Mike said. “We



would sing whatever was popular at the time because we weren’t writing that much. And while that was good, it is sometimes tough to sing songs from the heart that really aren’t from *your* heart.”

That simple statement and sentiment at a very early stage in Mike’s musical career, has been one of the driving forces behind what you hear in today’s Christian Country – and even some secular country – music.

“Those first few years we spent singing a lot of good music but it wasn’t our music, I really wanted to be able to sing stuff from the heart,” Mike continued. “That has been my desire since that point, to write music that I believe can change the heart of people. It’s the words and music that God gives that is going to make a difference in someone’s life. His word – even in song – will not return void!”

So the journey then began to truly understand the art of songwriting and the calling that God had given Mike to be the messenger. What transpired over the next few

years was a string of great successes as a singer-songwriter with 15 number one Christian Country radio hits, including “Song of the Year” honors at the 2007 Inspirational Country Music Awards with his hit “*Back in the Country Again*.” He was also honored as the “Songwriter of the Year” that same year. Other awards have included 1998 Songwriter of the Year for the Christian Country Music Association as well the coveted Entertainer of the Year (1998, 1999) and Male Vocalist of the Year (1999).

“It’s never been about awards or recognition for me. The main thing has always been the main thing, and that is telling the story of Christ. It’s been so important to me that we stick to the foundation of what this music thing is all about and that is Jesus Christ,” Mike said. “It’s not about performing or putting on a show; it’s about spreading God’s word. The music that we do that is rooted in country music has a way of really reaching everyday people, but it’s the Holy Spirit that attracts someone to the Spirit within you and for that moment you are singing soul to soul to somebody and God is using you to get His message into their heart. It’s as if God is taking something that is sweet and good out of you and filling a void in a person’s heart. That’s what using music as a ministry is all about for me – and should be for anyone that does this.”

Mike spent the early part of the ‘90’s bouncing back and forth between Nashville and his hometown where he served as co-pastor with his father at a local church in New Waverly, Texas. With the clear calling of God on his heart and the support of his father, Mike finally made the decision to answer the call into full-time music evangelism and move his family to Nashville, TN.

“Dad was always in our corner. If there was something that we felt God was calling us to do, Dad was completely in our corner supporting us. This was no different,” Mike explained. “Dad recognized that this music thing was bigger than just being tied down in a small town in Texas. He gave me the liberty to go out and do whatever God needed us to do but he knew that we needed to be in Nashville to really begin to make the impact that God was calling us to make. When I came to him and told him that I felt God calling me to Nashville, he told me that God had already spoke to him about it and I just needed to get going.”

Several weeks and months in prayer gave Mike the solid conviction of what he was being called to do and *not to do* when he arrived in Nashville. A move for any music-minded individual to the heart of Music City is never an easy one. The lure and attraction of potential fame and fortune as well as all the different venues to play your music searching for that next “big deal” can seem very enticing. But for a man on a mission from God, those things are nothing more than a distraction

from the call.

“When I came here, I felt like I was on a mission. The first thing that I knew I *wasn't* going to do was hit music row and start singing at all the joints and passing out press kits,” Mike said as he explained his focus on God’s call. “I didn’t want to get entangled and distract-



ed from what I knew that God had given me to do. Ever since I made the decision to move here, I just didn’t feel like I could get here fast enough. Even though I’ve now been here for over 15 years, I’m still expecting great things to happen with the music that God has given me.

“The music that God has given me to do is a lot more of a subtle approach to evangelism than what I wrote early in my musical journey. I’ve always felt like I had a burden to reach country music people – not just the listener, but the other artists, writers, producers – anyone that would listen. There was no way that I was going to do that when I came (to Nashville) coming in and swinging a bible. But, through the music it was a different deal. The important thing was to keep Christ at the center and we’ve done that! We’ve been blessed to be a part of some pretty interesting events with a lot of secular country artists and they’ve said ‘man, I wish we could do stuff like that and make a living at it.’ I’ve just always known that if we stuck to the message that God has given us, that He’d bless what we are doing.”

“When some of the stuff we’ve been doing for years as Christian Country music started showing up on mainstream radio by mainstream artists I couldn’t help but smile and laugh,” Mike says with a chuckle. “I said to myself ‘man, I’ve been writing and singing that stuff for years!’”

That writing and the style that Mike speaks of has spawned songs like the 2007 aforementioned ICM Song of the Year with lyrics like:

*He’s back in the country again*

*He must have walked down music row*

*Puttin’ ink in the writer’s pen*

*You just listen to the songs that ole DJ spins*

*There’ll be no doubt in your mind*

*That God’s back in the country again*

*You’ve got Craig singin’ what he likes about Sunday*

*And ole Ronnie moves us to tears with I believe*

*And Carrie tells us what happens when you let Jesus take the wheel*

*Yeah, when God’s in the country somebody’s gonna be set free*

*Now I like country and I’ve always dreamed of the day*

*When the Lord would show up in the song that the DJ plays*



*He was born in a stable out behind the inn*

*So don’t you be alarmed, He’s just back in the country again*



From that same CD titled “Back in the Country” Mike’s pen gave us the lyrics to another wonderfully reflective song called “Building a Better Country.” In it, Mike takes a good look at his journey to Music City and how God used him to possibly send a current through a town that doesn’t take to change very easily.

*I’m just building a better country that’s all*

*The kind that makes you feel*

*Like there is still hope*

*It’s in my heart, it’s in my life it’s, it’s in my songs*

*I’m just building a better country that’s all*

*People tell me all the time I could’ve made it*

*If I’d just add cheating words to my songs*

*Oh but I’ve lived long enough to make right choices*

*And I choose inspiration from above*

*Now every time, I listen to a country station*

*I can’t help but smile and sometimes laugh out loud*

*At how God has made his way into the music*

*Ain’t that what building a better country is really all ‘bout*

Since the latter part of 2008, Mike has taken a bit of a sabbatical to search for the path that God would have him on for Chapter 2 of this journey and he believes he’s found that path.

“I don’t think the message will change. If anything, it will be stronger and with a little more urgency. I think God has a plan for what He’s given me to do with this music and I’m just as excited today as I was over 20 years ago,” he says with a smile. “When you go back through my albums and you look at my writing, you see the progression of my walk and the revelation that God has brought into my heart. What you’ll hear more of today is me letting God use the song to do the preaching. We’re all real good about knowing how to put on a “program” whether it’s for a church service or for a concert, but God has convicted me to use the words He’s given me as a songwriter as the vehicle to spread His message of love. The Holy Spirit will convict people of the sin in their life through the song, but I’m just the messenger He’s using to spread that message.”

As he begins to step back out on the road, Mike is filled with anticipation for what awaits him around each turn. He’s still the consummate songwriter but the revelation of Who is really writing those songs is truer in his heart today than ever before and can be seen when reading the lyrics to one of his newest songs...

*“I’m just a songwriter laying my heart on the line*

*Telling stories, painting pictures with memories and words that rhyme*

*People ask me how I do it*

*What makes a lyric win?*

*And I say we all have inspiration*

*I’m just the one that holds the pen*

*Quick to take the credit for the songs that come my way*

*Knowing just above the paper I get help in what I say*

*Like brush strokes on white canvas*

*Colors merge with perfect blend*

*I’m applauded as the master*

*All I did was hold the pen*

*The songwriter lives within me*

*And though He’s never seen*

*He’s giving silent inspiration*

*To my heart when there’s a need*

*It’s not a job, it’s my conviction*

*To convey the Master’s plan*

*Now you know the secret*

*I’m just the one who holds the pen*

“All I want to do is be used by God to show folks that there is hope,” Mike said. “I want people to know that there is an answer and there is something more than what you have and His name is Jesus.”

Ain’t that what building a better country is really all about?



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# Reflections with *Sherry Anne*

## Suffering...And The Point Is?



Photo Courtesy of robmercier00

“For I am convinced that my present sufferings do not compare to the glory which is set before me”  
(Romans 8:18)

I can't help but to wonder, sometimes, if Christians suffer so that we desire not for the things of this world, but rather, to go “home.” I have loved the Lord since I could comprehend the meaning of His name, yet, I can scarcely recall wanting to leave my earthly home to dwell on streets of gold. I think it's a lot like a vacation. I travel a lot. I enjoy it so much that I would make a career out of it if I could—actually, I do! Anyhow, one of the most favorite places I have travelled to is Hawaii. I have been to a lot of islands but Hawaii tops them all! It is the perfect weather for me: 78-82 degrees every day with a light misty rain in the morning and a gentle breeze in the evening. The copious fruits and vegetables looked, tasted and smelled like they were harvested straight from the Garden of Eden. Friendly smiles and courteous gestures were in abundance; it is a way of life there. Soothing music was billowing out over the waves and, at every turn, you beheld the flowers-- oh the luscious flowers!!! I have terrible environmental allergies but the fragrances of these flowers were a delight to my very soul.

As I neared the end of my week there, I seriously thought: “I could get used to this!” So much so, that I painstakingly sat through a two-hour time-share presentation (or should I say guilt-and-coer-

cion presentation!) in order to explore the possibility of extending my visit. This was the only part of my trip that was even remotely painful. Speaking of pain, my body, at that time, had begun to experience the physical ramifications of a five-year Chiropractic career (I'm up to 15 years now!), and like my patients, painful joints had set in. Interestingly enough, I never had *one* ache or pain the whole time I was vacationing in Hawaii. Yup, this was the place for me; I wanted to stay and going back home was far from my mind...

As long as the weather was pleasant, the food savory, the accommodations heavenly, the attractions fanciful and the people congenial, one would hardly desire to return home. How different it would have been if it rained every day, the food was spoiled, the accommodations dreadful, the attractions costly and the service was rude. Should I have had the misfortune of suffering these things, surely, I would have longed to go home sooner.

And so, too, it is with the Christian. As long as the “prosperity” doctrine is working to our advantage; that is, the new car or house appears, the promotion is granted or the family is completely in one accord, we are content in this world. But, the minute we lose our job, our marriage, our finances, our health, etc., we begin to long for home—our eternal home. Not surprisingly, we are warned in several passages of Scripture (1 Cor 7:31, Heb 13:14, 1 Pet 2:11-12 and 1 Jn 2:16) that the earth, with all of its



lusts, is not our home; and, to not become attached to the things of this world for it is passing. To be sure, suffering affirms this.

We are, however, to “not lose heart” and be of good cheer: 2 Corinthians 4:16-18 tells us, “Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.” We are reminded that our afflictions are light and brief when compared to the glorious eternity that waits for us. Free from time clocks, traffic jams and other daily stressors is our heavenly home.

In addition to creating a longing for God and

things eternal, the Bible gives another reason for why we suffer: “Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.” (2 Corinthians 1:3-7) As we receive consolation from a loving God who understands the pain of suffering, we are to be a tangible extension of God’s mercy and extend solace to others.

Remember: “Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.” (Matthew 5:4) This world is not our home and *soon and very soon, we are going to see THE KING!*

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## The Publisher's 10 Questions for

By Rob Patz and Lorraine Walker

## The Page Trio

Nauvoo, Alabama, may not be a familiar vacation destination of many of our readers, but it is the home base of The Page Trio, a male group whose latest single “God Is Faithful” is climbing up the Gospel radio charts. Represented by Morris Music Group, the trio is becoming known for both singing and song writing. Each of the members has written songs featured on their current album, *I Surrender*. As the group sees its schedule expand for the New Year, we thought it was a good time to catch up with the men of Page Trio and introduce them to you, our readers.

*Rob: Will you please tell our readers about who Page Trio is and how you started singing?*

Wayne Page: “The Page Trio consists of me, my brother, Johnny Page and our Dad, Cranford Page. We grew up as a singing family and have been singing officially as a trio for the past nine years. We have been able to produce, write and record a lot of the material that we sing. In 2004, we were asked to sing for a few special events with our grandfather, Jim Page, who sang bass. We called ourselves Page Men. It was a special time to

be able to sing with him. ‘Paw Paw Page’ went home to be with the Lord in April, 2004. A few months had passed and our official start was when we were asked to sing at a local church for their homecoming October 10, 2004. We decided at that time to call ourselves The Page Trio. After that singing, churches began to call and doors began to open.”

*Rob: What is the story behind your current radio single?*

Wayne Page: “I was able to write ‘God Is Faithful’ after hearing my pastor, David Miller preach a sermon by that title. I started thinking about the text he read from 1 John 1:9: ‘If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.’ One thing he said was that God has always been faithful to him. That message spoke to me that day. I felt led to start the song from the point of view of the person sitting in the pew, hearing what he was preaching about. The last verse focused on the salvation experience of someone going to an old fashioned altar to accept Christ. I wanted the song to take anybody hearing it back to the old country church and a more

simple time.”

*Rob: What are some of the goals of The Page Trio for this New Year?*

Wayne Page: “Next year is our 10th year of ministry as The Page Trio. We will be planning a special Homecoming in 2014 to celebrate. We are also in preparations with our record company Morris Music Group to do a CD/DVD combo next year to mark this occasion. Most importantly our goal is to lift up the name of Jesus so it will draw people to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.”



*Rob: When you aren't on the road, what do you do with your free time?*

Wayne Page: “I spend time with my wife and family. I love to watch my daughters play sports and other activities. We also love to go out to eat and catch a movie.”

Johnny Page: “I also spend time with my family. I enjoy playing the guitar. I coach basketball at the school I work at. I love to watch my son play ball and my daughter dance.”

Cranford Page: “I play golf and watch my grandkids.”

*Rob: What is the one venue you are really looking for-*

*ward to singing at, in 2014?*

Wayne Page: “Emerald Coast Southern Gospel Music Association Sweet 16 Jubilee Weekend in Panama City, Florida, will be in January 2014. It will be held at a brand new 1,600-seat venue. It is always a great event.”

*Rob: If you could predict one thing that may happen in 2014, what would that be?*

Wayne Page: “This may be cheating on the question, but we will have our first song that charts in the Singing News. We already know ahead of time that our song ‘God Is Faithful’ will debut at #80 in the January 2014 charts and will also be #65 in the February 2014 charts. We appreciate all of the radio stations that are playing our music.”

*Rob: Who is your current favorite vocalist, any genre?*

Wayne Page: “Michael Booth; he is the real deal.”

Johnny Page: “Brad Paisley; he is a great musician, songwriter and singer.”

Cranford Page: “Lauren Talley; she has a great voice. I enjoy hearing her sing.”

*Rob: If you could have been any character in the Bible, who would that be and why?*

Wayne Page: “John. It always amazed me to think what John saw to be able to pen Revelation.”

Johnny Page: “Any of the disciples besides Judas. [I would have liked to be] able to witness firsthand the miracles and wonders Jesus performed.”

Cranford Page: “John the Baptist, because he was the first to proclaim Christ was here.”

*Rob: Who is your current favorite Bible teacher/pastor/evangelist and why?*

Wayne Page: “David Miller. He’s my pastor and preaches the word without apology. He truly has a ser-



vant's heart. He is very supportive of our ministry.”

Johnny Page: “Bobby Smith. He’s my pastor and has been a great influence in my Christian walk. He is also my father-in-law so I am trying to get some brownie points.”



Cranford Page: “Mickey Crane. He is a great man of God, has been my pastor for 16 years and has been a constant help to me and my family for many years.”

*Rob: If you could pick one song as your testimony, what would that song be and why?*

Wayne Page: “‘I Will Go On’ by The Gaither Vocal Band. It reminds me that we have to leave the past behind us. We need to continue to go on in our faith of Jesus Christ here in the present.”

Johnny Page: “‘I Stand Redeemed’ by Legacy Five, because it reminds me how unworthy we are that Jesus went to that old rugged cross to die for us.

Cranford Page: “‘Sinner Saved By Grace’ by The Cathedrals. The song says it all.

As you make your plans for 2014, whether or not your travels include Nauvoo, Alabama, you should include hearing The Page Trio in your itinerary. They will

remind you that God Is Faithful in this New Year and speak to your heart with their message as you enjoy their harmonies and seasoned vocals. The Page Trio is a group with a bright future in this New Year and for many years to come.

For more information on The Page Trio and to hear their single, “God Is Faithful,” visit their website at <http://www.thepagetrio.com/>





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# A New Beginning For The Real *Donna King*

By Lorraine Walker



Donna King is one of the most well-known, well-loved and seasoned performers to ever release a debut album. King has been a part of a successful trio, worked with many of the top artists to improve their craft and increase their audience, won awards for her talented production, and has written songs that have crossed genres in Christian music. Recently, she shifted gears and began to record and release music with her husband Zane. Now at last she has released her first solo album, beginning another stage in a musical career that many would only dream of having.

The effervescent Donna King is one of God's crusaders, encouraging people to 'Shine' the Light of Jesus through her music and through her life. King's vocals reflect honesty; her lyrics are reality. She is the *real deal*, a person whose walk matches their talk. King has walked many roads to come to this season of her life, a journey that might leave others bitter or worn. Yet her joy is pervasive in all of her interactions and is espe-

cially evident in her solo album, *Song Of Noel*.

"I have such a love for so many Christmas songs and I have a very special love for Christmas," King begins. "I came to my relationship with Christ at Christmastime. I trusted Jesus as my Savior as a young adult on December 15th, 1982. You know, in and of itself, Christmas time is a great witnessing tool to show people the way to Jesus; His invitation is so tender and so honest. So, knowing Zane and I are sharing music mainly as a duo ministry from an overall approach, which I couldn't be more thrilled about, what better first solo album to make than an album dedicated to celebrating that first moment when Heaven came to earth through the sweet baby Jesus, the Hope of the entire world. On a side note, Christmas music can be very stylistically diverse and I am too, so this was a good combo for my first solo endeavor!"

Donna King has been involved in Christian music for many years and has a truly exceptional vocal talent. Yet

she delayed recording a solo project for several reasons. “I waited a long time to do anything that involved singing again myself for some very deep reasons. I truly wanted to be led by God rather than by my want to do music. While any gift He has placed in us should be used, there are times of waiting that come to our lives, seasons of listening and quiet waiting. I had been through some serious turmoil and needed to concentrate on healing, growing, and putting some pieces back together.”



King opens her heart and shares, “The long story short is that I went through a divorce in 2007. At the time of the divorce I was a part of our thriving family ministry, Hope’s Call. I shared in that ministry with my daughter and my son-in-law, but the whole family was a part of it. It was a beautiful ministry in that, in spite of my own brokenness and the struggles in my marriage, God was able to use Hope’s Call in such powerful ways. It is proof that He can use us in spite of our own messes. At the same time, there are times when He calls us to give up what we want for what we need. I needed to not sing for a while. I needed to go to God’s nest and heal my broken wing before I could fly again. I wouldn’t trade my time in the nest because it taught me so much about my own weakness and my own need to descend to the feet of Jesus instead of continuously trying to fly above the turmoil in hopes I wouldn’t crash.

“With that, the time came when I felt God nudging me

from the nest and saying to me, ‘It’s okay, take a little flight. Start slow from one branch to the other and I’ll be very close by if you need Me.’”

God’s loving, healing hand was also evident in His gifts to King during this time. “He allowed a precious man to swoop into my life and sweep me off my feet. In March, Zane and I will celebrate two years of marriage and we are now celebrating sharing our music together. We are blown away by the success of a little song we sent to radio last year, ‘Hallelujah, Jesus Saves,’ and we are seeing the same response to our new single, ‘Shine.’”

Solid Gospel Radio Network DJ, Greg Hutchins, is a huge fan. “I have always loved Donna’s voice and it seems to just get better with these new releases!”

Ken and Jean Grady of Gospel Music Today can’t say enough of Donna and Zane King. Ken says, “We first met Donna quite a few years ago when she was singing with her family group, Hope’s Call. Her talent for vocal arranging was immediately apparent, and we are thrilled to see how she is using God’s gifts as one of the best producers in southern gospel, and now as a soloist and with her husband, Zane, one of the outstanding ‘new’ artists in southern gospel!”

Jean Grady adds, “Donna and Zane King have rocked the Southern Gospel music scene with ‘Hallelujah, Jesus Saves.’ The song is upbeat and the syncopation makes each listener stop and listen a little closer to what they are singing about. ‘Shine’ and ‘Hallelujah, Jesus Saves,’ breathe new life into Southern Gospel music with a little Country flair.”

These warm responses are just a sample of the reception the Kings have received from their new music. It’s obvious that Donna and Zane are now flourishing both personally and in their musical careers. “It is so evident that God is orchestrating this musical journey of ours and we are loving every minute of it. We’re in the process of finishing our first full length CD together. It should be ready to release nationwide in early spring.”

Donna continues to share about her new album. “I ended up recording this solo CD as a result of one of my ‘branch to branch’ flights a couple years ago. When I was slowly beginning to sing again two years ago, I recorded a couple Christmas songs that were special to me, as per God and Zane’s prompting. So, this year, when the prospect of a solo project arose, it felt right that it should be Christmas. First, because I love Christ-



mas music and secondly, because it had already been started two years back.”



“The best thing about recording this album was having the opportunity to sing every musical style I love all on one project,” Donna says. “I also loved the freedom of recording in my own studio, aptly named *Flight Studio Nashville* - notice the pattern about flying. I loved being able to go in the studio, shut the door and spend time crafting the music the way I dreamed it to be. I also loved having my husband there helping in the process. Those that know him know he is a master musician.”

“The challenge is easy to cite,” King continues. “It was very challenging to produce my own project because I am my own worst critic and can always find something I can do better. So, thank God for those He’s surrounded me with to be my stabilizers!”

Donna King’s Christmas album allowed her to sing every musical style and she proved that she is more than able to excel in whatever she chooses to sing. “Like Hope’s Call, I don’t feel tied to a single genre. This doesn’t mean I plan to try to be a rock star, but, stylistically, my music is pretty diverse and it always has been. Now, I am married to a man whose roots are in country music. We really love all of it when and if it

is done well. My recent single to CCM radio, ‘Give Me This Night,’ had been released to Southern Gospel radio for Christmas last year. It was noted that this song just really strikes a special chord in people in general so we were excited to see God use it among a wider audience.”

“Truly, I love Southern Gospel music,” Donna shares. “Why? Because the message isn’t dressed in too many layers, so we can really feel it in our bones. I believe it will always be a staple in my musical wardrobe. Then, I will dress it up and accessorize accordingly, because I tend to love to keep the wardrobe fresh and interesting! Most of all, I want to hug people with a song, all people.” King continues, “My vocal study and training is in Opera, but, I don’t plan on recording a CD full of Italian Arias. However, I may throw one in, every now and then, just to make Zane a bit nervous!” she laughs.

As part of the release of her Christmas album, Donna King took part in Compassion’s Voice Of Hope Christmas Tour, which also included Gold City, Steve Ladd and The Bowling Family. The Tour was highly praised by those who attended and was also highly memorable, especially the last evening in Indiana after a large snow-fall that kept many from attending. As King says, “It was an intimate experience!”

“The Voice Of Hope Tour was a lot of fun,” says Steve Ladd. “Donna set the tone for every night and really struck a chord with the people. It was fun to watch her and Zane do their thing! The response towards Compassion and those children were great. It was not about Donna or me, Gold City or the Bowlings. The whole Tour was about those children and reaching them in Jesus name!”

Ladd continues, “The last concert in Indiana was unforgettable. A huge snow storm came through. Bad roads, ice and snow, and only 23 could make it out. Not the best ending to a tour, but we all still gave 100%!”

“The benefits to being a part of this wonderful event were many,” King explains. “First, I got to go out and represent an incredible ministry that is very near and dear to my heart, Compassion International. Compassion is a ministry that focuses on providing for the physical and spiritual needs of precious children, around the world, living in extreme poverty. Anyone who learns about Compassion quickly realizes the amazing difference they are making for sweet and innocent children who would have little to no hope without the blessing of a sponsor coming into their life and giv-

ing a little money and a lot of love.”

King continues, “Another blessing was getting to share the stage with incredible artists who reminded me of what’s good, out there on the road in the world of music. The Bowling Family, Steve Ladd, and Gold City were all a complete joy to work with and I love them all. I’d like to especially note how much I came to know and love Tim Riley of Gold City. This man has a heart of gold and for God like I cannot explain. Not only that, but he took time to personally encourage me in my musical gifts which touched my heart in a way he may never know.”



“While I know that God is moving in all of this, I still question myself at times,” Donna shares. “I have been and will continue to be behind the scenes, helping other artists to make music and share it. It can be a comfortable, safe place to be, so when other artists remind me of my calling, it fuels my heart to continue and to trust the plans God has for me. Thank you Tim Riley. It’s always a blessing when artists can alternate between the balcony and the stage. My friend, Dusty Wells, who is another tremendous encourager in my life, always mentions those balcony people who urge us to press on in our gifts. It seems extra special when a person can be both on the stage and in the balcony.”

As God provides encouragement, Donna plans to continue to perform both as a soloist and as a duet with her

husband Zane. “I will definitely do both, and I love doing both, but I most enjoy sharing ministry with Zane. The team feels so right. God is so good! The amazing thing is, we share the exact same philosophy when it comes to music and ministry: Make music as great as you can make it and be as real as you can be. People need real! Also, walk through doors God opens for you rather than pushing on doors that are there for someone else to walk through. Finally, hug people with a song. People need music. God uses music. God uses people. People need God.”

The Kings definitely hug people with their music as they use their talents to reach others for Jesus. A large part of the making of their wonderful music is their studio, as Donna referred to in an earlier comment. Now she says, “We love our studio! First, let me tell you about the ambiance of Flight Studio. Many people know my production and marketing company is called Vertical Sky. So, I had to theme Flight around that. So, the control room is *sky blue* and the isolation booths are *indigo blue*, like a night sky. Our hope is to make people feel invited, peaceful, relaxed, and okay – creamy!” laughs Donna.

“I do my major music tracking at other larger studios that are equipped for full music tracking,” continues King. “I use the best of the best. I couldn’t ever name them all but some of my favorite musicians are Jason Webb, Mark Hill, Dan Needham, Steve Brewster, Gordon Mote, Dave Cleveland, John Willis and the list could go on. My favorite cellist, who often comes to Flight to overdub songs I’m producing, is John Catching. My favorite steel guitar/dobro player happens to be none other than the incredible Zane King!”

King says that Flight has seen many terrific artists come through their studio already. “There are really too many to name, but some recent highlights have been the Anchormen, Mercy’s Well, Beyond The Ashes, and many more. We’ve had some wonderful background-vocals recently, like the one and only Ray ‘Chip’ Davis, Angie Primm, and others. We also do lots of songwriting and songwriting demos and I have a few pop and country projects in the works as well!” King concludes, “Artists heading into the studio with me this winter are Mercy’s Well, the Boyds, Simeon’s Promise, the Greesons, and many others. I am so excited for everyone to hear the music God brings to life through Flight Studio in 2014.”

Assisting artists to achieve their very best through Flight Studio is also something Donna King achieves



through Vertical Sky, her radio promotion, marketing and music production venture. King explains how this



came into fruition. “Many years ago, I was in the studio with Roger Talley. I will never forget the day. I was sitting in on a final mix on an early Hope’s Call project, when we were still an all female trio. Roger was our producer. He looked at me a few hours into our efforts and said these words, ‘You know you’re a producer right?’ He said, ‘You should be producing music for other artists.’ I kind of chuckled. I really thought it was nice of him to say but I didn’t really believe him. But God did. God knew. That very week I got my first call to produce an album for a group. I haven’t stopped since that day.” God knew the plans He had for Donna, just as the Bible says in Jeremiah 29:11, “For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”(NKJV)

Donna explains the next phase of her musical journey. “Over my years of production work, I found it troubling that people had great music, but much of it never got heard. This prompted me to learn and execute the marketing aspects of music. I began to work in radio promotion and publicity about ten years ago.

“I love helping people make their music come to life as a producer more than anything else I do, within my behind the scenes efforts, but I’m also very grateful to be able to help them to reach people with the music they make. My approach to radio promotion is changing, but I believe these changes are good and needed. I

am much more interested in helping people to get real and effective airplay than to get a ‘chart number.’ Those who are familiar with our new Launch program at Vertical Sky find this approach refreshing. I’m excited about what’s ahead for Vertical Sky.

“Another area that is really growing at Vertical Sky and Journey Press is our songwriting endeavors. I am in writing appointments with other wonderful co-writers just about every week and I love that. And, yes, my favorite co-writer is Zane! I’m sure that’s not a surprise!”

As Donna and Zane King have experienced many exciting adventures with their music over the past two years, Donna is thrilled about the release of her first solo album and the new challenges ahead. “I am so excited about 2014! With the positive changes within Vertical Sky, I plan to continue to write and produce more than ever. I’m also excited to go out and sing again and to finish an album with Zane, as a duo. Our first road trip will be to Illinois in the third week of January. I’ll be posting those venues on our websites early next week.”

On a more personal note, Donna continues, “Most of all, I want to continue to try my wings and fly and land where God wants me. I want to stay close to Him so He can continue to point me in the direction He wants me to go. I have always told my artists that the reason I named my company Vertical Sky is, when we keep our eyes on GOD, even the sky is not the limit! Now I find myself living out those words for myself. For that, I give God every bit of the glory. He’s not my co-pilot. He’s my *pilot*. And He is such a good one. May I never try to take over the flight plan because He really is the wind beneath my wings.”

As Donna and Zane King reach out to others with their genuine music, giving hugs to their listeners with every song, it is easy to see that Almighty God is directing their lives. That makes it easy for Donna to be so real and open with others and to be excited about every new twist and turn in the road. The New Year will be an adventure for this couple and for all who listen to their music. Watch for the Kings to keep flying skyward in 2014!

For more information on Donna King, please visit: <http://www.donnakingmusic.com/>

For more about Compassion, visit [compassion.com](http://www.compassion.com).



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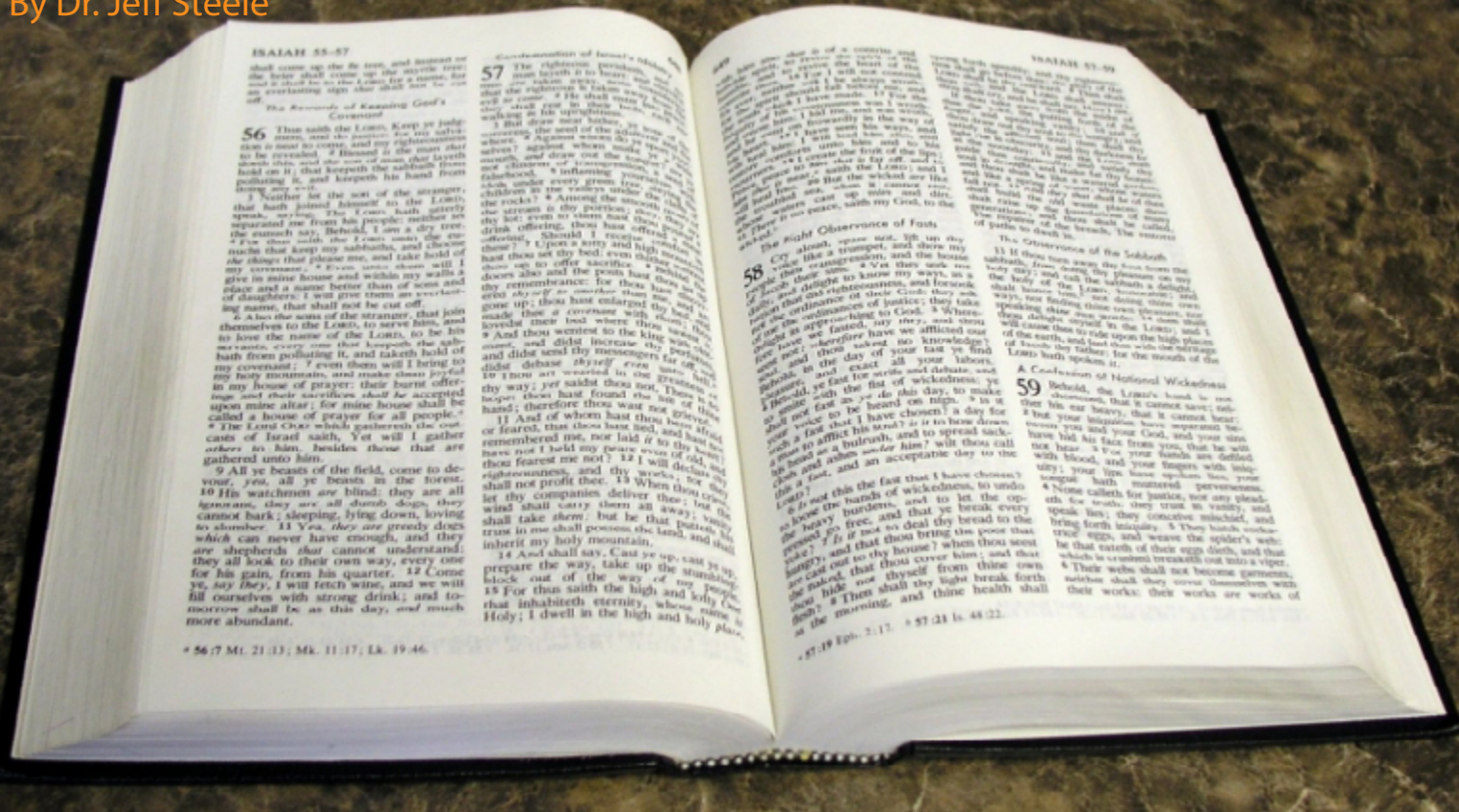


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# "Comfort My People"

By Dr. Jeff Steele



Isaiah has been telling the people of Judah for quite a while that, "The Assyrians are coming, The Assyrians are coming. Get your house in order and make sure everything is ready cuz they are coming to overrun our country." Now however, Isaiah has changed or tweaked his message. He tells them that they will escape by the hair of their chin-e-chin chins The Assyrians but will in fact be overrun instead in the future by The Babylonians. It is the classic scenario that says, "I have some good news, I have some bad news."

This nation was in turmoil and Isaiah KNEW how to pronounce judgment. After all he has pretty much just spent the previous 39 chapters doing just that. Now in the midst of all that he opens chapter 40 with God telling him to COMFORT His people. In fact God says Isaiah I want you to speak comfort to Jerusalem.

One of the real dilemmas that I face as I go to the pulpit every week is the very real fact that there are hurting, broken people in the congregation that need to be comforted. As a preacher of the Gospel I have to ask myself every week when I finish preaching: Was there anything in my message today that would offer comfort to hurting people? Dear preacher (and a lot of you read these notes) I don't care how articulate you are or how loud you holler when you pronounce the latest "judgment" on the people you must always ask yourself the question...Did I offer hope to the hurting in my message? I didn't ask you if you won the argument. God never called us to win an argument in our preaching. He called us to win, love and help people! I've heard a lot of winning arguments but I'm not hearing a lot of life changing sermons that offer comfort to the broken hearted. Someone has said...If you preach to the broken-

hearted you will never lack for an audience. Just because you don't know about them doesn't mean they're not out there. This past Sunday I looked out over the congregation and saw a man recovering from surgery...a mother who just found out her son was being deployed-to Afghanistan. There was a sister with an alcoholic brother who was "drinking again." There was a man who just witnessed his brother being committed to an institution so he could "dry out" and try again to beat HIS addiction. One lady recently had gone through a terrible divorce and is now a single mother trying to raise 3 kids and make both ends meet in the middle. I could go on and on about the people I was preaching to who NEEDED comfort! II Corinthians 1:3 describes God as the God of all comfort. That same God expects His pastors to deliver that kind of comfort to His people. How does OUR preaching measure up on the "comfort meter?"

God KNEW Judah needed comfort and He instructed Isaiah to "comfort my people...speak comfort to Jerusalem." He has instructed us to do the same.

Photo Courtesy of K. Horn





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# HEADED IN THE *Wright* DIRECTION

By Dixie Phillips



At the 2013 National Quartet Convention, Edna Wright was voted President of Southern Gospel Music Promoters Association. This might be a new position for Wright, but she is not a newcomer when it comes to Gospel music. She has been performing it most of her life and promotes the music she believes in through her own promotional company—Gospel Gold Music Connection.

A pastor's daughter from Georgia, Wright grew up singing with her six siblings in her father's church and at an early age her keen musical ear picked up on pitch and harmony. As her older brothers and sisters strummed and on their guitars, Wright strummed on the heartstrings of her father's congregation every time she sang the glory down.

Wright fell in love with the Gospel in the music before she could read. During an Easter service in North Carolina, Wright recalls the Holy Spirit dealing with her tender heart. "They were having a baptism. I felt I should follow the Lord in baptism

so I hurried to my parents and told them," Wright recalled. Since Wright was the smallest baptismal candidate, they placed her at the back of the line. When she stepped off the last step, she was over her head in the water. "A few of the folks attending were worried I would drown so the ones in charge decided it was wise to baptize me on the steps and not have me go out in the deep water."

When Wright was only eight, her family moved to Florida. Her love for music continued. She enjoyed listening to the Grand Ole Opry on the radio and was thrilled when she learned her new elementary school sponsored a country music show every year where popular artists appeared and performed. Ferlin Husky, Roy Drusky, Skeeter Davis, Loretta Lynn, and many others enhanced the young girl's musical experience.

All the combined influences can be seen and heard in The Wright Family's music today. She presently sings alto with her husband James, daughter Glenda, grandson Brandon, and this year they have added Gerri Barnett, a powerful vocalist with a country flavor, to the mix.

For many years The Wright Family was signed with Morning Star Records, a division of The Eddie Crook Company. While there they had seven charting songs. They travelled doing radio tours and enjoyed meeting deejays, radio station owners, and managers. They were privileged to get know the people who loved and promoted Gospel music.

Wright is quick to share how she has seen firsthand the power of a Gospel Song. "One Sunday morning we were singing in a very large church. As my daughter, Glenda, began to sing, 'Grace is never too far, no matter where you are,' a miracle happened before our eyes. A gentleman, with tears streaming down his face, slipped from his pew to the floor and crawled to the altar and repented. Gospel music is the most powerful music on earth. It will soften hardened hearts, uplift the discour-



aged, and brings hope to the hopeless. The presence of the Lord in the music brings a little bit of heaven on earth."

Although Wright is busy as an artist, she is even busier as a very successful Gospel music promoter. "I choose my artists and concert venues carefully to give people the best I can offer. I make it affordable enough to share Gospel music with large audiences." Wright's creativity helps her think "outside the box" and strategically include Christian comedy in her concerts. "I purposely make my concerts entertaining, as well as sharing the message of Jesus Christ."

Wright is not only a pastor's daughter, but she is a pastor's wife. "James pastors Redemption Christian Center in Villa Rica, Georgia, where we are building a new sanctuary." Wright continued, "I include Tribe of Judah Praise Team, the drama team from the church in all my concerts. The audience loves them. I'm convinced people are going to have some form of entertainment and it might as well be Christian comedy, drama, and Gospel music."

Since Gospel music is a male-dominated industry, it could be very intimidating for a woman, but Wright is confident God placed her there.



"Many years ago I asked God to put me in a position where I could influence lives and impact the world with the message of Jesus Christ. He did just that. I speak at women's conferences and encourage women to let their light shine and be all they can be for Jesus! Satan knows that women are the



strength behind our families and the prayer warriors behind our churches. I welcome this opportunity and challenge to promote the greatest music on earth. God placed me here for such a time as this."

Wright is excited about the future of Gospel music. Her heart's desire is to bridge the gap between the average age gospel music attendee and the young people. "Young people are the future Church! Without them, we have no future," Wright said. Because of Wright's deep conviction, she has included her grandsons in her Gospel music ventures. "My grandson, Brandon, is 21. He sings with us. His younger brother, Mitchell, who is 18, runs the sound and also performs drama with The Tribe of Judah Praise Team."

Wright realizes how short life is and she's determined to do all she can to continue spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ to every nation. "I am so thankful for a Savior that extends grace and mercy to a nation that seems to have forgotten where we came from. We are His Body and need to do all we can to spread the Good News."

You can learn more about Wright's gospel music endeavors at [www.gospelgoldmusicconnection.com](http://www.gospelgoldmusicconnection.com).

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# The Carolina Quartet Returns to Southern Gospel Roots

By Angela Griffin

*Photo Courtesy of Scott Hill*

The Carolina Quartet returns to their Southern Gospel roots after a long run of singing Inspirational Country at churches, malls, fairs, and festivals. It was at a recent concert that Chris sat down at the piano and hammered out a few southern gospel classics. Scott, Roger, and Lamar gathered round to sing the beloved hymns. Magic filled the auditorium. The anointing fell and it just felt right! It was at that moment that Chris asked the question... "Is it time for us to return to our Southern Gospel roots?" In their hearts they all knew the answer and Scott quickly replied "It is time!"

Scott Whitener is a phenomenal lead vocalist who traveled with the legendary Singing Americans, filled in with Gold City and helped transition the Melody Masters to today's Carolina Quartet. Scott loves a full plate, loves to stay busy, and is a task driven guy. He has pastored the Gateway Cowboy Church for the last four and a half years and is the Associate Pastor of Music at Temple Baptist Church in West Gastonia, NC.

Behind every good quartet is a great baritone singer and Roger Burnett is no exception to the rule. "Roger can harmonize with a freight train rolling through

town, shares Scott. Everybody who comes in contact with Roger loves Roger!"

What an incredible tenor voice Chris Roberts possesses. In fact, Chris is one of the finest tenors in our industry today, as well as an accomplished pianist. Chris is one of the most talented individuals and holds the Music Ministers position at Mud Creek Baptist Church in Hendersonville, NC under the leadership of Dr. Greg T. Mathis.

Bass vocalist, Lamar Levi, is one of the smoothest bass singers to grace the stage. Lamar is a family man who has maintained the same job since graduating high school. He is one of the most solid individuals you will ever meet.

Scott, Roger, Chris and Lamar have a strong desire to do what God has called them to do... sing! "We are just willing vessels looking for opportunities to share the gospel," shares Scott. "I really don't know that we need any motivation to do what we do. We have never looked at ministry as an occupation. I think if it ever became a job to us, we would quit! It's certainly

not a job you would choose at all, but I can tell you it's the most rewarding job you will ever have."

Scott notes ... "We are excited to return to our Southern Gospel roots and reunite with fans all across the



Shortly after the quartet started their journey as Inspirational Country Artists, they were invited to perform at a local mall during the Christmas season. Scott shares, "I noticed a gentleman leaning against the wall as we were finishing our set. Just before we took a short break, I said we will be at our product table if anyone would like to speak with us. The gentleman made his way over and began to share how his life was in shambles. He began to share how his addiction to gambling had taken its toll on his life. His wife and kids had left and he had lost everything! He asked if we would pray with him and we did. A few weeks later I received a letter thanking us for our prayers. He also stated that he had joined Gamblers Anonymous and was working on getting his life back. Another few weeks passed and he wrote to tell us that he was attending church. Today he is the pastor of a very large church."

The quartet is working on a new Southern Gospel project to be released early 2014. The group will record at Son Sound Studios in Bessemer City, NC under the direction of Holly Robinson.

country." For bookings contact Scott Whitener at 704-678-1683 or via Email at [cowboypastor1955@aol.com](mailto:cowboypastor1955@aol.com).





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# Contributors

## SGN SCOOPS



Rob Patz is the President and CEO of Coastal Media Group. Rob has an 18 year history in radio hosting the nationally syndicated radio show, "The Southern Styles Show" since its beginning in 1993. Rob is also the owner of the internet's #1

Southern Gospel station, [SGMRadio.com](http://SGMRadio.com). In 2009, Rob Patz acquired [SGNScoops.com](http://SGNScoops.com), including the all-digital Scoops Magazine and the Diamond Awards. Rob has taken part in several Christian television projects working in front of the camera and also has helped create several syndicated television programs as well. Rob does voice work for various outlets including fortune 500 companies as well as emceeing concerts and special events. Email Rob at [rob@sgnscoops.com](mailto:rob@sgnscoops.com).



As a Worship Pastor in 2009, Rhonda entered the Gospel music scene with an album of all originals in one hand, writing gifts in the other along with a heart full of passion for Gospel music. Although she knew no one and nothing about the industry, she followed

the calling in her heart walking through doors only God could have opened. By 2011, Rhonda was named Editor in Chief of SGNScoops Magazine. This role has placed Rhonda in a position of learning all aspects of the industry and also provides a platform to unleash her contagious enthusiasm. After juggling church ministry and music ministry, Rhonda felt led to pursue Gospel music full time beginning in January 2014. In addition to her work with SGNScoops Magazine, Rhonda is a singer, songwriter, speaker and founder of a ladies trio, Rhonda Frye And Riverside. Rhonda also works with other artists and promoters organizing and promoting concerts and national events. Rhonda's heart's desire is to use the tool of Gospel music to inspire others to experience reconciled and real relationships with Christ. For more information, visit [rhondafrye.com](http://rhondafrye.com).



Lou Wills Hildreth appears on the Gaither Homecoming Videos, and is a founding member of Texas First Family Of Gospel Music, the "Singing Wills Family." She helped pioneer Christian television as host of "Wills Family Inspirational TV." After moving to Nashville in the sixties,

she was the first woman to own an artist management agency. Lou is an inductee of the Texas Gospel Music

Hall Of Fame, GMA Gospel Music Hall Of Fame, SGMA Hall Of Fame at Dollywood, and the Christian Music Hall Of Fame. She is a recipient of an Honorary Doctorate Of Sacred Music from Louisiana Baptist University. Recently, Gaither Homecoming Magazine named Lou in the "Hall Of Honor" series, and the Southern Gospel Music Guild gave her a "Lifetime Achievement Award." Lou is celebrating a 65th wedding anniversary in 2011 with Howard, and they live in Houston near son Dr. David Hildreth and daughter Kathryn Mumaw, and 4 grandchildren. Visit Lou at: <http://louhildreth.com>



Sandi Duncan Clark and Cliff Clark make their home in Easley, S.C. where they enjoy traveling, gardening, and the beautiful South Carolina weather. Sandi has worked in journalism for more than thirty years, and she is thankful

that her love for God and Gospel music provides a great opportunity to positively impact the careers of so many in Gospel music. Email Sandi at [sandi@sgnscoops.com](mailto:sandi@sgnscoops.com).



Christian Health & Fitness Expert Laurette Willis is an author with Harvest House Publishers, and the Director of PraiseMoves Fitness Ministry with DVDs, a training program and PraiseMoves Instructors on four continents (<http://PraiseMoves.com>), on Facebook <http://on.fb.me/Praise-Moves>.

Laurette invites readers to get started on the road to better health and fitness for spirit, soul and body. For a free, easy-to-follow 21 day program visit: <http://ChristianFitnessKit.com>



Stephanie Kelley is a public speaker and owner of Queen-O-Q, a blog featuring coupon match-ups, freebies, samples and information on frugal living. She is married, has three children and lives in Washington State. [Queen-O-Q.blogspot.com](http://Queen-O-Q.blogspot.com)



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Jennifer Campbell is a singer, songwriter, musician, and middle school English teacher from McAlpin, Florida. Along with her passion for teaching, she has an even greater passion for ministering to others, spreading the message that there is joy around the bend. She serves as a group leader for

Women of Faith, designs websites, and writes an inspirational blog at <http://jenniferjoycampbell.blogspot.com> Learn more about Jennifer at <http://jennifercampbell.net>



Canadian-born Lorraine Walker has a love for Jesus Christ, music and writing. The combination of these passions has produced artist features and monthly columns for Southern Gospel publications including SGM Radio website and SGN Scoops Digital

magazine. Lorraine desires that the power of the written word will glorify her Lord and bring readers closer to the love, peace and majesty of the Almighty. Email Lorraine at [lorraine@sgnscoops.com](mailto:lorraine@sgnscoops.com)



Angela Griffin is an International Field Representative for Love A Child, Inc., a 501 c 3 humanitarian organization to the island of Haiti. A rich Christian family heritage guided her path to minister in song to the broken, to feed the hungry, and lead others to Christ.

On December 31, 2002 she married Tim Griffin, an accomplished Southern Gospel pianist. Tim and Angela then combined their musical talents and formed the group "The Griffin's." They have traveled throughout the Southeast spreading the love of Christ.



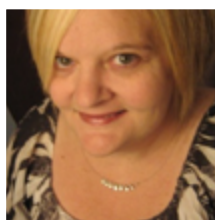
Scott Rhoades has a passion for writing, and enjoys sharing his experiences and interests through publication and speaking in public forums. After completing graduate work in 2006, he began to pursue freelance writing and continued public speaking. In 2009, he

took to the airwaves, joining the staff of WMUG in Indiana, Pennsylvania where he is the Program Host for Sunday

Morning Light.

The owner of Ivory Hill Studios, he is the co-author of Legacy of Love: Memories from Ivory Hill - a collection of stories and poems highlighting the history of the Rhoades family and the small coal-mining town of Nanty-Glo, Pennsylvania. Scott is also a songwriter, publishing his first song, I'm Under His Wings, with Asheville Music Publishing/Chris White Music in 2010.

Website: [www.scottrhoades.net](http://www.scottrhoades.net)



Joan Walker grew up with music in the house and first heard Southern Gospel in her early teens. With almost a quirky (some may say 'weird') need to make sure words are spelled correctly and the apostrophes are in the right place, she enjoys proofreading the

articles for the SGN Scoops magazine each month...and looks beyond the letters and commas to the wonderful words each writer has written. Joan counts it as a blessing in her life to be part of SGN Scoops!



Pete Schwager is a web developer and graphic designer with a passion for Christ. He was born in Santa Rosa, California and moved to Oregon where he spent most of his life. He now lives in the quiet town of Ringgold, Georgia and enjoys living in the

country with his family. You can find him online at <http://peteschwager.com>



Staci Schwager helps with marketing and communication with her husband's web design company, Cre8able Media. Together they make a great team! Staci being the "talkative" one, loves being able to communicate one on one with clients and organizing

ideas. While Pete on the other hand is diving into the design and coding aspects to make the real masterpiece! Most of Staci's days are filled with preparing homeschool lessons for her kids, couponing, gardening, tending to her chicken flock and spending as much time on the beautiful, country land God has blessed them with.

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Richard (Rick) Kiser Jr. is the author of the children's book series, *Carly and Friends*. He also has written one novel, *"Forever My Son."* He is a full time computer technician and lives in Virginia with his wife and two daughters. To learn more about Rick visit his web site [www.](http://www.carlyandfriends.com)

[carlyandfriends.com](http://www.carlyandfriends.com)



Dixie has been married to Pastor Paul Phillips for 35 years. The couple has been honored to serve the congregation of the Gospel Lighthouse Church in Floyd, Iowa, for 31 years. They have four grown children and four "perfect" grandchildren.

Dixie is a ghostwriter, award winning children's author, and songwriter. She and her sister-in-law Sharon won the 2012 Singing News/Solid Gospel Songwriters Search with their song "Hidden Heroes." Her favorite pastime is counting her blessings. If you'd like to know more about Dixie, visit her website at [www.floydslighthouse.com](http://www.floydslighthouse.com) or [www.phillipsandphillipsmusic.com](http://www.phillipsandphillipsmusic.com). You can e-mail Dixie at [Phillips4Him@myomnitel.com](mailto:Phillips4Him@myomnitel.com).



My name is Tina Wakefield and I am currently Music Minister for Amazing Grace Worship Center in Alabaster, Al. I have led worship for over 18 years as well as teach adults how to live everyday life in Victory as a Christian. I enjoy playing and singing Gospel Music whenever

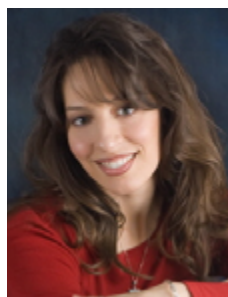
and wherever I am invited. I currently have three Cd s available on my website at [www.tinawakefield.com](http://www.tinawakefield.com) and just released my first music video with Godsey & Associates called, "The Choice" available on YouTube. I write a lot of the music we sing at church and also record my original songs. My family is very ministry oriented with Pastors, Teachers, Musicians, and Singers. My heart's desire is to spread the gospel of Christ through any and all open doors that I receive.



Dr. Jeff R. Steele is a pastor, conference speaker, singer, songwriter, husband, father, grandfather and friend. He is currently the Senior Pastor at Faith Baptist Church in Cullman, Alabama. Their services are webcast worldwide; they have a weekly television program and host an annual Jubilee each August that attracts hundreds from around the southeast. Dr. Steele is beginning his eighth year there. As a songwriter Jeff has been credited with 17 Number One songs in Christian music as well as four BMI Gold Medals for Great National Popularity as measured by Broadcast Performances. He has also been recognized by BMI as Christian Songwriter of the Year on several occasions. The group, The Steeles was featured across the nation and was seen on numerous magazine covers, feature articles, television and radio programs during their ministry on the road. Jeff is still writes songs and articles, sings on occasion and speaks in conferences and revivals. Jeff is married to Sherry, his wife of 31 years and they have three grown children. Visit Jeff on YouTube, Facebook, Twitter and at [www.jeffrsteele.com](http://www.jeffrsteele.com).



Erin Stevens is a uniquely talented 18 year old shutterbug, singer, guitar player, writer, blogger, social networker and shooting coach. She is the owner/operator of Photos For Keeps By Erin. She also travels in full-time Gospel music ministry with The Stevens Family. Photography is her passion, and singing for Christ is her calling. Check out her photography website [www.photosforkeepsbyerin.com](http://www.photosforkeepsbyerin.com) and her ministry website [www.stevensfamilymusic.com](http://www.stevensfamilymusic.com).



Sherry Anne Lints, a Doctor of Chiropractic, singer, speaker, actress, writer and fitness trainer, was born with a bilateral hearing and speech impairment. She appeared in the films, *Clancy* and *The Perfect Gift* and was a special guest on 100 Huntley Street, in Ontario, Canada. She is a contributing author for the book, *Modern-Day Miracles* and released her second CD, *Keep on Prayin'*, July 2012 and has opened for many of the Gaither Homecoming Artists. Additionally, Sherry Anne helps lead worship and drama at her church. For more information, visit: [www.](http://www.SherryAnne.com)



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After graduating from Middle Tennessee State University with a Mass Communication degree, Craig Harris has been in the journalism field for more than 15 years, working daily as both a photographer and writer at one of the largest non-daily publications in the state of Tennessee. He has experience in feature writing, news writing, action photography, portrait photography, web-site maintenance and layout. Craig has been a part of numerous awards, both collective and individual honors in the journalism field. He has had articles published in numerous newspapers and magazines on a variety of subjects, most notably in the world of sports.

Craig's Southern Gospel interest dates back for approximately the same time span, having closely followed the industry since the later portion of the 1990s. He also performed for seven years with a local trio prior to joining the SGN Scoops staff.



John Randolph is a Country Gospel singer, songwriter, speaker, business leader, husband and father who has a burning desire to see the hearts of men turn back and embrace the calling that God has given us to lead our homes. After serving for seven years as the lead singer for a regional East Texas Southern Gospel Quartet, and two years on church staffs as an Interim Worship

Leader, John is now in his second full year of solo music ministry. More importantly, John is finally getting the answer to the question he's asked God for over 20 years... "why did you let me get this degree in Journalism?" With his first full-length solo-project CD under his belt, John has been recognized in the Christian Country music genre with numerous award nominations including winning the 2013 Male Horizon Award. His initial single release – Call Me Old Fashioned - was a Top 10 Country Gospel Music hit for over 13 months in 2012. You can learn a lot more about John and JR Ministries at [www.jrministries.com](http://www.jrministries.com) as well as connect directly with him on Facebook ([facebook.com/johnrandolphministries](https://www.facebook.com/johnrandolphministries)).



David's distinctive sound and his ability to blend perfectly with a variety of vocalists has made him a valuable commodity on live events as well as in the studio. His compassionate and gentle spirit makes him more than an artist, it makes him a great friend!

David began singing at age 6 with family. In 1990, he filled in for the Speer Family and later that year he became the lead vocalist for The Trailblazers. In 2002, Staton filled the lead position with Priority. While with Priority, the group was the resident gospel group at the Silver Dollar City theme park in Branson, MO and they performed for over one million people in one year. After the group disbanded in 1995, David continued to write for artists in many different genres of music while occasionally performing solo. It was during this time that his song, "Every Knee Shall Bow", recorded by Dottie Peoples, was nominated for a Grammy Award. His song, "Together We Can" was adopted as the national theme song to bring awareness to violence in schools. The music video (Together We Can) that featured many Atlanta based artists was shown at the 1999 Grammy Awards show, which helped launch the careers of artists like R&B's Jagged Edge, India Arie, and 4.0. In 2004, David partnered with Mike LeFevre to form The LeFevre Quartet. During the seven years that he was the lead vocalist, the group had many hit songs and won many awards. After leaving the LeFevre Quartet in 2011, Staton began working on a solo project and also began singing with Palmetto State Quartet. The group appeared on television and toured with country music superstar, Wynonna Judd while Staton was there.

Through the years, artists like Gold City, Jeff & Sheri Easter, Kingsmen, Singing Americans, Dixie Melody Boys, Imperials, Dottie Peoples, Ball Brothers, LeFevre Quartet, Palmetto State Quartet, Priority, Trailblazers, The Greenes, Ivan Parker, Brian Free and many more have recorded David's music. From 2005 to 2013, Staton was the Executive Vice President for Song Garden Music Group in Nashville, TN. In recent years, the National Quartet Convention has asked David to be a part of an industry advisory panel to help artists who need assistance and training. Not only has David made a mark as an artist, he is passing on his talent and knowledge to new artists, influencing and shaping the future of Gospel music.